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14

# PROVIDENCE DISPLAYED;

OR,

## ANECDOTES

### ILLUSTRATIVE OF PROVIDENCES

OF

### MERCY AND JUDGMENT.

BY JOHN WHITECROSS,

AUTHOR OF "ANECDOTES ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE ASSEMBLY'S SHORTER CATECHISM," "MORAL AND RELIGIOUS ANECDOTES," ETC.

A NEW EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED.

EDINBURGH:
JOHNSTONE AND HUNTER.
LONDON: ROBERT THEOBALD.

M.DCCC.LII.

1

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY JOHNSTONE AND HUNTER,
HIGH STREET.

# CONTENTS.

## PROVIDENCES OF MERCY,


| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| In the Supply of Temporal Wants, | 5 |
| In Deliverance from Imminent Danger, | 14 |
| In Deliverance from Persecutors, Assassins, &c., | 22 |
| In the Prevention of Suicide, | 28 |
| In the Conversion of Sinners or Comfort of Saints, | 31 |
| In Answer to Prayer, | 35 |
| In the Reward of Liberality, | 44 |
| In the Reward of Keeping the Sabbath, | 47 |


## PROVIDENCES OF JUDGMENT,


| | |
|---|---|
| On Persecutors, | 50 |
| On Sabbath-Breakers, | 52 |
| On Profane and Irreligious Persons, | 57 |
| On Liars, Perjured Persons, &c., | 62 |
| On Murderers, Oppressors, Thieves, &c., | 65 |
| On Disobedient Children, | 69 |

# PREFACE.

THE careful observation of Providence may be regarded as a duty and a privilege: "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord." On the other hand, the neglect of this observation is threatened in the Word of God: "Because they regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up." In the following brief production, a two-fold view of Providence is given, in which we are called to "behold the *goodness* and *severity* of God." Although it be true that, generally speaking, "all things come alike to all," and that "no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them," still, there are many cases of exception in which the Providence of God is so strikingly displayed, both in a way of mercy and vengeance, that men are constrained to say, "Verily, there is a reward for the righteous; verily, he is a God that judgeth in the earth."

In collecting materials for the present compilation, the Author has taken the liberty of making a few selections from several of his published volumes, particularly in cases where suitable anecdotes could not, from other sources, be readily found. For the sake of order, and to afford facility in selecting appropriate anecdotes for particular occasions, the Compiler has arranged them in various sub-divisions under two general heads. He is not aware of any work of the kind being before the public, equally small in price, and comprehensive in plan, as the present production.

This edition has been very considerably enlarged, and, it is hoped, improved. May the perusal of the little work, through the Divine blessing, prove beneficial to the reader!

KENNET, *July* 1852.

# PROVIDENCE DISPLAYED, &c.

## PROVIDENCES OF MERCY.

### PROVIDENTIAL SUPPLY OF TEMPORAL WANTS.

1. WHILST the cruel persecution, carried on by the Emperor Maximilian, was raging, the ancestors of the celebrated Basil, along with a few servants, fled for safety to a certain cave in the side of a mountain. There they remained above seven years, exposed to the inclemency of the weather, and subsisted upon bread alone. But that God who fed the Israelites in the desert with manna and quails, directed unprovided and unexpected caterers to visit them,—namely, a number of fat stags, which approached to the place of their retreat, though no person was pursuing them. Of these they killed what was necessary for their present wants, and conveyed the rest, which made no opposition, but went willingly, to a place of confinement, to be reserved for future use. "So true," adds the pious Witsius, "is that observation of the Psalmist, 'The young lions do lack and hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.'"

2. During the bloody persecution in France, under Charles IX., the Protestants fled in all directions for safety. A servant of Christ took refuge in a secluded spot, where no supplies could be obtained from his friends. Here he most probably would have perished, had not Providence directed a hen to lodge an egg daily for some time in the place of his concealment.

3. Mr Turner in his History of Providence relates, that when the people of a certain sea-port town (Hastings) in England were in great poverty, and suffered much by scarcity of money and provisions, it pleased God that an unusual and great shoal of herrings came up the river, by which the inhabitants were plentifully supplied for the present; and the week after a multitude of cod succeeded them, which were supposed to have driven the former into the river before them; by which means the necessities of the poor inhabitants were unexpectedly and remarkably supplied.

4. The biographer of Fox, the celebrated martyrologist, relates

the following remarkable incident of him, which took place about the end of Henry the Eighth's reign:—"As Mr Fox one day sat in Paul's church, spent with long fasting, his countenance thin, and eyes hollow, after the ghastly manner of dying men, every one shunning a spectacle of so much horror, there came to him one whom he never remembered to have seen before, who, sitting by him, and saluting him with much familiarity, thrust an untold sum of money into his hand, bidding him be of good cheer; adding, that he knew not how great were the misfortunes which oppressed him, but suspected it was no light calamity. He should, therefore, accept in good part, from his countryman, that small gift which courtesy enforced him to offer; he should go and make much of himself, and take all occasions to prolong his life; saying, that within a few days new hopes were at hand, and a more certain condition of livelihood. Fox never could learn to whom he was indebted for this relief, though he earnestly endeavoured to ascertain. Some believed that the bearer was sent by persons who were anxious for the welfare of Fox. However that might be, in a few days he was invited to reside with the Duchess of Richmond, to become tutor to the grandsons of the Duke of Norfolk."

5. The Rev. Mr Flavel informs us that a good woman, from whose mouth he received the fact, being driven to great extremity, all supplies failing, was harassed by unbelieving doubts and fears with regard to her future prospects, when, lo! at the very moment when despair had nearly overcome her, turning over some old things in a chest, she discovered a piece of gold, which supplied her immediate wants, and lasted till another door of help was opened. "If these things fall out casually, how is it," asks the pious writer, "that they observe the very juncture of time so exactly?"

6. During the siege of the Protestant city of Rochelle, under Louis XIII., and Cardinal Richelieu, the inhabitants endured great miseries before they yielded to an honourable capitulation; the terms of which, however, were far from being kept by their enemies. During the height of calamity among the Rochellios, some charitable individuals, who had previously formed secret magazines, relieved their starving brethren without blazoning their good deeds. The widow of a merchant named Prosni, who was left with the charge of four orphan children, had liberally distributed her stores, while any thing remained, among the less favoured neighbours; and whenever she was reproached with profusion and want of foresight by a rich sister-in-law of less benevolent temper, she was in the habit of replying, "The Lord will provide for us." At length when her stock of food was utterly exhausted, and she was spurned with taunts from the door of her relatives, she returned home destitute, broken-hearted, and prepared to die together with her children. But it seemed as if the mercies once

displayed at Zarephath were again to be manifested; and that there was still a barrel and a cruse in reserve for the widow, who, humbly confident in the bounty of Heaven, had shared her last morsel with the supplicant in affliction. Her little ones met her at the threshold with cries of joy. During her short absence, a stranger visiting the house had deposited in it a sack of flour, and the single bushel which it contained was so husbanded as to preserve their lives till the close of the siege. Their unknown benefactor was never revealed; but the pious mother was able to reply to her unbelieving kinswoman, "The Lord hath provided for us."

7. Mr Andrew Duncan, minister of Crail, in Fife, was a sufferer for conscience' sake. Having been banished to Berwick, to live "upon his own charges," he was almost literally "pined to death by hunger." With a numerous family, and a wife near her confinement, he was reduced to the utmost hardships. One night in particular, when the children were crying for bread, and there was none in the house to give them, the poor exiled minister occupied himself alternately in praying to God, in pacifying his children, and comforting his wife. He exhorted her to wait patiently on God, who was now trying them, but would undoubtedly provide for them, though he should rain down bread from heaven. This confidence was the more remarkable, as they had neither friend nor acquaintance in that place to whom they could make their case known. Early next morning, a man brought them a sackful of provision, and went away without telling them from whence it came, though entreated to do so. Shortly after this, during the night, when the good man knew not where to apply for aid to his suffering wife, a lady came to their door, and having sent a servant back with her horse, to return for her at a certain time, requested permission to act the part of servant and nurse. She continued to do so till her services were no longer required, and on her departure presented the astonished and grateful couple with a box, containing linen, cordials, and money; but, notwithstanding all their entreaties, would neither tell who she was, nor whence she came.

8. During the seventeenth century, while the Rev. John Cotton was minister of Boston, intelligence reached that town of the distress of the poor Christians at Sigatea, where a small church existed, the members of which were reduced to great extremity of sufferings by persecution. Mr Cotton immediately began to collect for them, and sent the sum of £700 for their relief. It is remarkable that this relief arrived the very day after they had divided their last portion of meal, without any other prospect than that of dying a lingering death, and immediately after their pastor, Mr White, had preached to them from Psalm xxiii. 1: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

9. The Rev. Mr Nosworthy, who died in the seventeenth century,

was, by the persecution of the times, occasionally reduced to great straits. Once when he and his family had breakfasted, they had nothing left for another meal, and his wife asked, "What shall I do for my poor children?" He persuaded her to take a walk with him, and seeing a little bird, he said, "Take notice how that bird sits and chirps, though it knows not from whence it shall have a dinner. Therefore, be of good cheer, and do not distrust the providence of God; for are we not better than many sparrows?" They returned, and before dinner-time they had plenty of provisions brought them; and thus was the promise fulfilled, "They who trust in the Lord shall not want any good thing."

10. Mr David Anderson, once minister of Walton-upon-Thames, fearing the return of Popery, went, with his wife and five small children, to reside at Middleburgh, in Zealand. Some time after, he was reduced to the greatest distress, but was restrained by modesty from making his case known. One morning, however, after he had been at prayer with his family, when they were all in tears together, because his children asked bread for breakfast, and he had none to give them, the bell rang, and Mrs Anderson found a person at the door, who gave her a paper containing forty pieces of gold, which he said a gentleman had sent her. Soon after, a countryman brought a horse loaded with provisions; but neither of the messengers would say from whom they were sent. Afterwards, money was regularly conveyed to Mr Anderson to pay his rent, and ten pounds sterling every quarter; yet to the day of his death, he never discovered who was his benefactor. But Mr John Quick, pastor of the English Church at Middleburgh, in 1681, was told by a gentleman then in the magistracy, that he carried the money to Mr Anderson, being then apprentice to a pious merchant of the place, who observing a grave English minister apparently in want and dejected, privately inquired into his circumstances; and, with all possible secrecy, made him those remittances, saying, "God forbid that any of Christ's ambassadors should be strangers, and in distress, and we neglect to assist them."

11. The Rev. Henry Erskine, who laboured in Northumberland in the seventeenth century, was often with his family reduced to very great straits, but had to record a number of remarkable interpositions of the providence of God in his favour. At one time, in particular, their small store was entirely exhausted. When they had supped in the evening, there remained neither bread, meal, flesh, nor money, in the house. The children, awaking early in the morning, cried for bread. The good man must have felt exceedingly for them, not having a morsel to give, and not knowing where he was to find a breakfast, either for the parents or the children. But his faith did not fail, and his mental tranquillity remained undisturbed. With his usual cheer-

fulness, he did what he could to entertain the children, and to encourage the sorrowing mother and himself to depend on that gracious Providence which feeds the young ravens when they cry for food. It is even stated, that he took a musical instrument, with which he sometimes played, and began to divert them with a tune. He played and wept alternately; he being in one apartment and they in another. While he was thus engaged, they heard the sound of a horse's feet coming along by the side of the house, and immediately a country-fellow knocked hard at the door, and called for some one to help him off with his load. Being asked whence he had come, and what was his errand, he informed them that he came from the Lady Raeburn with some provisions for Mr Erskine. They told him he must be mistaken; and that it was more likely to be for Mr Erskine of Shielfield, in the same place. He replied, No: he knew what he said, and he was not such a sot as they took him to be; he was sent to Mr Henry Erskine. "Come," he concluded, "help me off with my load, or else I will throw it down at the door." They therefore took it from him, and brought it into the house: and having opened the sack, they found it well filled with meal, cheese, and flesh, for the relief of the family. Thus he experienced the accomplishment of the promise, "Bread shall be given him, his water shall be sure;" and was mightily encouraged to rely on his Heavenly Benefactor in all his future straits.

12. At another time, having made a visit to Edinburgh, his finances were so much reduced that he had only three half-pence in his pocket. Though standing in need of some refreshment, consciousness of inability to pay the bill made him ashamed to enter a tavern and call for victuals. But when walking in the streets, somewhat pensive and perplexed, he was addressed by a person apparently come from the country, who inquired whether or not he was Mr Henry Erskine? He answered in the affirmative, and asked what he had to say. "I have a letter for you," was the reply. The letter, which was immediately delivered, had seven Scots ducatoons inclosed in it, and consisted of the few following words:—"Sir, receive this from a sympathizing friend: Farewell." Mr Erskine invited the bearer to accompany him to an adjoining house of entertainment and drink with him; and no one else being present, proceeded to inquire with earnestness who his kind benefactor was, that he might return him thanks. The honest man, however, replied, that he must be excused from mentioning the name; for secrecy was enjoined, and he could not betray his trust. Mr Erskine, anxious to form at least some plausible conjecture regarding the unknown friend to whom he was indebted for this seasonable aid, then began to ask him to what part of the country he himself belonged. But the man, wishing, it appears, to get rid of Mr Erskine's importunity, begged

him to stop a little while he went out. Being once gone, however, he returned no more; and who that generous benefactor was, the grateful recipient of his bounty could never discover.

13. Being on a journey, at another time, his money fell short, and he was in danger of being exposed to much inconvenience. But, as he walked on, he stepped aside towards a bush of rushes, and, when attempting to fix his staff in the marshy ground, he heard some thing tinkle at the end of it. On stooping down to examine the spot, he found two half-crowns, which did him good service on his way home.

14. The Rev. John Mortimer was an eminently pious and zealous minister, who lived in the seventeenth century, and frequently preached in some of the deserted churches in London during the prevalence of the plague. After this he removed to Exeter, where he was so greatly reduced in his circumstances as to be compelled to leave home on account of his being in debt. As he was walking along the road, he met a man driving some sheep, whom he endeavoured to avoid. But the man came up to him, and put a paper in his hand, which contained a sum of money. He immediately returned to his wife, who had been greatly dejected, and gave her the paper. On opening it, they found nothing written but these words—"To preach providence." The whole family, as might easily be supposed, were greatly affected on receiving such a seasonable supply in so remarkable a manner.

15. Above a century ago, a pious, hard-working couple lived in a sequestered part of Scotland, and struggled through life for a subsistence to themselves and their family. On one occasion, they were reduced to the greatest extremity of want; all their resources had failed. Being entirely destitute of provisions, the children were put to bed without supper, where they soon cried themselves asleep. The father, much dejected, went likewise to bed, leaving his wife, whose maiden name was Ann Young, alone. She took the large family Bible, and implored a blessing on its contents, when the following text involuntarily came into her mind, "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills."

Thinking this text not so applicable to her present circumstances, she opened her Bible to look out a more appropriate passage; still, however, the passage referred to was uppermost in her thoughts, and all her efforts to dismiss it, and fix on another as more suitable, were vain. She continued wrestling in prayer, and reading the Scriptures in turn, till break of day, when a loud impatient rap was heard at the door. "Who's there?" said Ann. "A friend," was the reply. "But who is a friend?" replied she; "What are you?" "I'm a drover; and quick, mistress, and open the door, and come out and help me. And if

there's a man in the house, tell him also to come out with all speed, for one of my cattle has fallen down a precipice, and broken its leg, and it is lying at *your door*."

On opening the door, the first object that met her astonished gaze was a large drove of cattle from the Highlands of Scotland. The drover felt quite at a loss to know how he should dispose of the animal. To drive it on in its maimed state was impracticable. By remaining in this place till he found a purchaser, and thus detaining his whole herd, might incur more expense than the animal was worth. "I never," he exclaimed, "was more completely brought to my wit's end in my life;" and then, turning to Ann, he added, "Deed, mistress, I must just make you a present of it, for in truth I don't know what else I can do with it; so kill it, and take care of it, for it is a principal beast. I'll answer for it, a mart like *that* has never come within your door." And without waiting for thanks, he whistled on his dog, and joined the herd, which was soon seen moving slowly on its weary journey.

The father assembled his little family around him to unite in prayer, and render thanks to God for his providential kindness towards them. They had *meat* sufficient for months to come, but they had no *bread*. About six o'clock on the morning, however, another knock was heard at the door. On opening it, they found the under steward of Lady Kilmarnock, whom Ann had formerly served, with a sackful of meal, sent by her Ladyship, from an apprehension which pressed on her mind that her old servant might be in want. These pious cottagers had now a more abundant supply of food in their house than they had ever before possessed; and brought to them at a time and in a manner so remarkably illustrative of the special providence of God.

16. The Rev. John Newton relates, that many proofs had passed under his immediate notice of the faithfulness of God in answering the prayers of parents who had left behind them young and helpless children. He especially mentions a friend of his, a laborious Christian minister, in the west of England, in whose family the divine promise was fulfilled. This good man, when dying, was advised to make his will, but he replied, "I have nothing to leave but my wife and children, and I leave them to the care of my gracious God;" and soon after he died happily. No prospect appeared for the support of his family; but the Lord disposed a man, who had always disliked his preaching, to feel for his destitute family, and by his means, £1600 were raised for them; and the clergy of Exeter, who had never countenanced his ministry, gave his widow a house and garden for her life; so that she lived in greater ease and plenty than in the lifetime of her husband.

17. "Being detained," says General Burn, "on board the Cormorant at Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, for nearly a month, by strong westerly winds, I grew weary, and being anxious to know

something about the Royal George, I set off early one fine morning in the passage-boat for Portsmouth, purposely to inquire at the Admiral's office if she was soon expected in port. I fully intended to have returned to Cowes by the first boat, as I had just money enough left for that purpose; but to my great sorrow, about noon it began to blow a most violent gale, so that none of the boats would venture out for several days. Never was I placed in a more distressing situation. A perfect stranger in Portsmouth, with only a few pence in my pocket, I continued walking round and round the ramparts nearly the whole of the day, till I was so completely worn out with fatigue and hunger, that the violence of the wind almost drove me off my legs. Night was approaching; finding it impossible to continue in this state much longer, and being wellnigh distracted, I began to devise schemes where I should rest, and should satisfy my craving appetite. At last I fixed on the following expedient: Having a pair of silver buckles on my shoes, the gift of an affectionate sister, I determined, though grieved at the deed, to take them to some Jew in the town, and exchange them for metal ones, in the hope that the overplus would procure me a lodging, and purchase some food. Just as I was stepping off the rampart to put my plan into execution, I was accosted in a very friendly manner by an old acquaintance, who shook me by the hand, and asked me if I had dined. When I answered in the negative, he replied, 'Then come along with me; we are just in time.' By this friend I was plentifully supplied for a few days, till the weather permitted me to return to my ship at Cowes. Thus the same compassionate God who feeds the ravens when they cry was at no loss to find means to supply the wants of an ungrateful mortal, who did not then seek him by prayer, nor acknowledge the benefit so seasonably bestowed; but having been since several times at Portsmouth, I have walked round the ramparts with a glad heart, in the recollection of his mercy, praising the Lord under a feeling sense of his goodness."

18. In the winter of 1803, a poor man sent one of his children to the sea side, to gather the small pieces of sticks that might have been washed on shore. While thus occupied, the little girl observed a piece of paper floating on the waves, and blown to and fro by the wind; and, at length, it was cast ashore, on the exact spot where she stood. She took it home, and it was found to be a pound note! By this means the family were relieved from the utmost want. The whole of the household, consisting of the man, his wife, and eight children, had been suffering the severest privations for some time; and as he was a pious man, he did not fail to recognise and acknowledge the hand of Providence, and to notice the fulfilment of the declaration, "Ye are of more value than many sparrows."

19. The Rev. Thomas Scott, the celebrated commentator, at one time of his life was called to struggle with many difficulties, but received at the same time many unexpected helps. "I had," says he, "frequent attacks of sickness; and after one long and dangerous illness, which had occasioned heavy additional expenses, my wife, who was seldom disposed to distrust Providence, lamented to see the increase of our debts, as the medical charges amounted to above ten pounds. It was my turn on this occasion to be the stronger in faith, and I answered confidently, 'Now observe, if the Lord do not in some way send us an additional supply to meet the expense, which it is not in our power to avoid.' I had at the time no idea of the source whence the additional supply was to be derived; but, in the afternoon of the same day, when I was visiting my people, Mr Higgins, jun., called at my house, and left a paper, which he said, when I had filled up the blanks, would entitle me to ten pounds from a sum of money left for the relief of poor clergymen. This I never received at any other time, nor can I recollect the source from which it came."

20. A minister in the neighbourhood of London was at one time in very straitened circumstances. All his money being expended, and himself and his children being in want of shoes, his mind was exceedingly depressed. He had made his wants known to God, however, and he heard him. While seated at his breakfast-table, with his family, one morning, a knock at the door announced the arrival of the post. Having received a letter, he broke it open, and found inclosed two one-pound notes, with the following kind address:—"Dear Sir,—You must be content to receive the inclosed as the gift of God, through one of his unworthy people on earth, as I do not intend to give you my name; and should any inquiries be made upon the subject, it would only hurt the mind of one who, you may be sure, is your friend and well-wisher. May God bless it to you.—August 31, 1825."

21. A pious man in Upper Canada, relates in a letter the following interpositions of Providence in his behalf:—"One day after we had spent all that we had for medicine, and nothing left in the house but potatoes, our cat caught a wild rabbit, and brought it to the door, and stood still while my wife took it from her. Of course, we were much struck with the circumstance; and being ill at the time, it came very acceptably."

22. "Another time, a person returning from market, called to light his pipe, and, inquiring after our health, my dear wife told him that I was very ill in bed. He made answer, that if the main stay was laid up, we must be in want. He went away a few steps, and then came back, and put a dollar into my wife's hand, saying that would help us for the present, and he would send us a little flour. I was engaged at the time wrestling with God in prayer, not knowing any thing about it, when my dear wife came to me,

with tears in her eyes, saying, 'Here is some help,' showing me the dollar; for we had eaten the last meal that was in the house, and *did not know what to do, but to pray.* I thought on Dan. ix. 23. What makes it the more remarkable is, that we had no particular acquaintance with the person; and he knew nothing of our circumstances to induce him to act thus kindly. Where is the infidel who would say, 'This is all chance?'"

23. "Who else was it but the God of Elijah," says Dr Krummacher, "who, only a short time ago, in our neighbourhood, so kindly delivered a poor man out of his distress; not, indeed, by a raven, but by a poor singing bird? You are acquainted with the circumstance. The man was sitting, early in the morning, at his house-door; his eyes were red with weeping, and his heart cried to heaven, for he was expecting an officer to come and distrain him for a small debt. And whilst sitting thus, with his heavy heart, a little bird flew through the street, fluttering up and down, as if in distress, until, at length, quick as an arrow, it flew over the good man's head into his cottage, and perched itself within an empty cupboard. The good man, who little imagined who had sent him the bird, closed the door, caught the bird, and placed it in a cage, where it immediately began to sing very sweetly, and it seemed to the man as if it were the tune of a favourite hymn, 'Fear thou not when darkness reigns;' and as he listened to it, he found it soothe and comfort his mind. Suddenly some one knocked at the door. 'Ah, it is the officer!' thought the man, and was sore afraid. But no, it was the servant of a respectable lady, who said that the neighbours had seen a bird fly into his house, and she wished to know if he had caught it. 'O yes,' answered the man, 'here it is;' and the bird was carried away. A few minutes after, the servant came again. 'You have done my mistress a great service,' said she, 'she sets a high value upon the bird, which had escaped from her; she is much obliged to you, and requests you to accept this trifle, with her thanks.' The poor man received it thankfully, and it proved to be neither more nor less than the sum he owed! And when the officer came, he said, 'Here is the amount of the debt; now leave me in peace, for God has sent it me.'"

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### PROVIDENTIAL DELIVERANCE FROM IMMINENT DANGER.

1. Sir Thomas Gresham, who built the Royal Exchange in London, was the son of a poor woman, who, while he was an infant, abandoned him in a field. By the providence of God, however, the chirping of a grasshopper attracted a boy to the spot where the child lay, and his life was by this means preserved.

After Sir Thomas had, by his unparalleled success as a merchant, risen to the pinnacle of commercial wealth and greatness, he chose a grasshopper for his crest; and becoming, under the patronage of Queen Elizabeth, the founder of the Royal Exchange, his crest was placed on the walls of the building in several parts, and a vane or weather-cock, in the figure of a grasshopper, was fixed on the summit of the tower.

2. During the period when the Protestants were besieged at Beziers, in France, a drummer was one night passing through the town in a state of intoxication, and, under the impulse of a mischievous frenzy, he rang the alarm bell, by which the inhabitants were aroused from their beds at the silent hour of midnight. This man's drunkenness, however, was overruled for good; for it happened that at this very moment the besiegers were attempting an assault. Thus, by an apparent chance, but a real providence, were the inhabitants preserved.

3. In the year 1561, the Moors having made a descent on the island of Majorca, committed the most horrid devastations. A woman seeing them seize her little daughter, then only seven years old, and that her assistance was not sufficient to rescue her from the hands of the enemy, began to think how she could save her own life, and thus made her escape. Her agitation and confusion were such that she took the road that led to the seaside, whither the Moors bent their course to make to their shipping. The sight of them made her perceive her error; and to screen herself from their fury, she concealed herself among the bushes of a neighbouring hedge. In the mean time the pirates advanced, one of them carrying the child on his shoulders, till tired out with her cries, they at last flung her with violence into the hedge, and left her there. By an admirable and special direction of Providence, the child was thrown exactly into the place where the mother lay concealed, and fell directly into her arms!

4. A credible historian informs us, that about one hundred and fifty years ago there was an earthquake in Switzerland, by which part of a mountain was thrown down, which fell upon a village that stood under it, and crushed every house and inhabitant to atoms, except the corner of one cottage where the master of the house, with his family, were together praying unto God.

5. In the year 1709, a packet-boat, returning from Holland to England, was so damaged by a tempest, that she sprung a leak, and was in the utmost extremity of danger. When all the mariners and passengers were in the last distress, and the pumps had been worked to carry off the water, but all to little purpose, by a good Providence the hole filled, and was stopped seemingly of itself. This struck them all with wonder and astonishment. No sooner did they get safe into port than they examined the ship to ascertain the cause, and found a fish sticking in the very hole,

which had been driven into it by the force of the tempest. But for this wonderful providence they must all have perished.

6. Mr Wesley, father of the Rev. John Wesley, was roused from sleep by the cry of fire from the street, but little imagining that the fire was in his own house, he opened his bed-room door and found the place full of smoke, and that the roof was already burned through. Directing his wife and two girls to rise and flee for their lives, he burst open the nursery-door, where the maid was sleeping with five children. She snatched up the youngest, and bade the others follow her; the three eldest did so, but John, who was then six years old, was not awakened, and in the alarm was forgotten. The rest of the family escaped—some through the windows, others by the garden door, and Mrs Wesley, to use her own expression, "waded the fire." At this time, John, who had not been remembered till that moment, was heard crying in the nursery. The father ran to the stairs, but they were so nearly consumed that they could not bear his weight, and being utterly in despair, he fell upon his knees in the hall, and, in agony, commended the soul of the child to God. John had been awakened by the light, and finding it impossible to escape by the door, climbed up a chest that stood near the window, and he was then seen from the yard. There was no time for procuring a ladder; but one man was hoisted on the shoulders of another, and thus he was taken out. A moment after, the roof fell in. When the child was carried out to the house where his parents were, the father cried out, "Come, neighbours, let us kneel down; let us give thanks to God! He has given me all my eight children: let the house go, I am rich enough." Mr Wesley remembered this providential deliverance through life with the deepest gratitude. Under one of the portraits, published during his life, is a representation of a house on fire, with the Scripture inquiry, "Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?"

7. A pious old man, who had served God for many years, was sitting one day with several persons, eating a meal upon a bank, near the mouth of a pit, in the neighbourhood of Swansea. While he was eating, a pigeon, which seemed very tame, came and fluttered in his breast, and slightly pecked him. It then flew away, and he did not think much about it, till, in five minutes, it came again, and did the same. The old man then said, "I will follow thee, pretty messenger, and see where thou comest from." He rose up to follow the bird; and whilst he was doing so, the banks of the pit fell in, and his companions were all killed.

8. John Brotherton was a soldier, and fought at the battle of Minden. When he left home, he took a small Bible, which he determined always to carry with him. When going to the battle,

he put his Bible between his coat and his waistcoat, over his breast. It was the means of saving his life; for one of the enemy thrust at him with a bayonet, and the point of the weapon pierced through his belt and coat, and about fifty leaves of the Bible.

9. When the Rev. Mr Abernethy, in his youth, was diverting himself, with a servant who attended him, upon the great bridge at Belfast, happening to cast his eye upon something at a distance which had attracted his notice, they ran off on a sudden; and the moment they removed, the arch, upon which they had been standing, fell down; so they narrowly escaped being crushed to death.

10. The late Mr Newton of London, when engaged in the slave trade off the coast of Africa, relates that one day, having dined on board, he was preparing to return to the river, as formerly; he had taken leave of the captain, received his orders, was ready in the boat, and just going to put off, and sail from the ship. In that instant the captain came up from the cabin, and called him on board again. He went, expecting further orders; but he said he had "taken it in his head," as he phrased it, that Mr Newton should remain that day in the ship, and accordingly ordered another man to go in his room. Mr Newton was surprised at this, as the boat had never been sent away without him before; and asked him the reason. He could give him no reason, but that so he would have it. Accordingly the boat went without him, but returned no more. She sunk that night in the river, and the person who had supplied his place was drowned. He was much struck when he received news of the event next morning. The captain himself, though quite a stranger to religion, as far as to deny a particular providence, could not help being affected; but he declared that he had no other reason for countermanding him at that time, but that it came suddenly into his mind to detain him. Mr Newton used always to consider this as one of the most extraordinary circumstances of his life.

11. The punctuality of Mr Newton, while tide-surveyor at Liverpool, was particularly remarked. One day, however, some business had detained him, and he came to his boat much later than usual, to the surprise of those who had observed his former punctuality. He went out in the boat as heretofore, to inspect a ship, but by some accident the ship blew up just before he reached it; and it appears, that if he had left the shore a few minutes sooner, he must have perished with the rest on board.

12. Mr Jonathan Scott was once riding near Shrewsbury, his native place, when his horse fell under him, and the rider's neck was dislocated. A person of surgical skill coming by at the moment, and perceiving the accident, immediately replaced it; a circumstance which he was accustomed to repeat with the great-

est sense of gratitude to the God of his life. Thus at the very moment when death appeared, help was provided by a gracious Providence, and a valuable life was preserved for the great work which was afterwards wrought in and accomplished by him.

13. The Rev. Richard Cecil, in his childhood, was often exposed to imminent danger, and only preserved by evident Divine interposition. The following is a remarkable instance. His father had in the ground, near his dye-house, several large tanks of water, one of which was sunk into the earth, and in winter was frequently covered with ice. A hole was made in the ice for the purpose of supplying the horses with water. At this hole Richard was playing with a stick, till he suddenly plunged under the ice. The men had received particular orders over night to go to work in a part of the dye-house, from which this piece of water was not visible; but, for reasons which could not be assigned, they went to work at an opposite part, where it was directly before their eyes. One of the men thought he saw a scarlet cloak appear at the hole broken in the ice, and resolved to go and see what it was. In attempting to take it out, he discovered it to be the scarlet coat of his master's son, who was taken from the water apparently dead, but, after long efforts, he was recovered.

14. The Rev. Thomas Charles had a remarkable escape in one of his journeys to Liverpool. His saddle-bag was, by mistake, put into a different boat from that in which he intended to go. This made it necessary for him to change his boat, even after he had taken his seat in it. The boat in which he meant to go went to the bottom, and all in it were drowned. Thus did God, in a wonderful way, preserve his servant—"immortal till his work was done." God had a great work for this his servant, and he supported and preserved him till it was completed.

15. When the late Rev. Dr Davidson, formerly Mr Randall, of Edinburgh, was a child, he experienced a remarkable preservation from death, which he sometimes mentioned to his friends, and always in terms of the liveliest gratitude to the Almighty, who had so evidently interposed to rescue him from going down to the grave. In the neighbourhood of the manse at Inchture, where his father, Mr Randall, was for some years minister, there was an open well, which often gave rise to much apprehension and dread in the minds of parents, lest their children should fall into it. One day, Thomas Randall, when amusing himself near the well, fell in. There being no person at hand when the accident occurred, the child must have perished but for the following remarkable circumstance. The parish schoolmaster, Mr Peebles, and his wife, both worthy persons, and who had a large family, happened to live in the immediate vicinity. Mrs Peebles, one forenoon, missed one of her children, and expressed great alarm to her husband that their boy might perhaps be drowned in the

well. Both parents ran together to the well in quest of their child, and, on descending the few steps that led to it, Mr Peebles observed something in the water. With a trembling heart he pulled it out, when, to his astonishment, and that of his wife, it was not their boy, but the minister's son, Thomas Randall. On mentioning this striking event to an intimate friend, Dr Davidson remarked the preservation was of God. Can a sparrow fall to the ground without our Heavenly Father?

16. Formerly, when the natives of Eimeo felled trees on the mountains, after lopping the branches, they paused, offered a prayer to one of their gods for a safe passage, and then launched the trunk down the side of the slope, standing in silence, holding their breath, and with their eyes following its course till it reached the valley. Once when Mr Henry, missionary there, was assisting some of his people to procure timber for building the brig Hawes, having descended from the mountain to refresh himself at a brook which ran at the foot of it, he sat down on the bank, and was about to drink, but refrained in the instant, and removed about two yards off, where access to the water seemed more convenient. While drinking there, a tree, which had been felled above, came thundering down with such velocity and force, as scarcely to have been perceived by him before it had plunged with the fore end deep into the earth at the very spot from which he had just risen. He could not regard his escape as otherwise than strikingly providential.

17. Samuel Procter, a class-leader in the Methodist Society, was formerly a grenadier in the first regiment of foot-guards, and took part in the struggle on the plains of Waterloo. He always carried a small Bible in one pocket, and a hymn book in the other. In the evening of June 16th, his regiment was ordered to dislodge the French from a wood, of which they had taken possession, and from which they annoyed the allied army. While thus engaged, he was thrown a distance of four or five yards, by a force on his thigh, for which he could not account at the time; but when he came to examine his Bible, he saw, with lively gratitude to the Preserver of his life, what it was that had thus driven him. A musket ball had struck him where his Bible rested, and penetrated nearly half through the volume. All who saw the ball said that it would undoubtedly have killed him had it not been for the Bible, which served as a shield. The Bible is kept as a sacred deposit, and laid up in his house like the sword of Goliath in the tabernacle.

18. Some years ago, as a young man and his father were travelling in the woods of America, they came to a very large old tree, one which there appeared a kind of pathway to the top. This appearance excited the young man's curiosity to examine the cause. He ascended to the top, but observed nothing parti-

cular, except that the tree was hollow in the heart. He sat down on the edge of the opening, but had not sat long when part of the edge gave way, and he fell to the bottom of the excavation. What must have been his horror when he found himself in the midst of a bear's den, consisting of two young bears, and knew not how soon he might be visited by the old ones!—His father, unable to extricate him from his perilous situation, left him in search of help. While he was gone, the old bear entered this cell at the top, and let herself down, with her hinder parts towards the bottom. When she came within the young man's reach, he had presence of mind to take hold of her tail; she was so alarmed by this unexpected reception, that, under the greatest perturbation, she scrambled hastily to the top with the trembling youth suspended by her tail. On arriving at the top, by a strong push he caused the bear to tumble headlong to the ground, which, from her fear, was not difficult to effect. The fall completely disabled her; but the young man took refuge in one of the boughs, till relieved from his disagreeable situation by the arrival of his father and some countrymen.

19. Some time ago, about thirty persons were engaged in hay-making in Yorkshire. At a time when the rain was pouring down in torrents, the lightning awfully vivid, and the thunder rolling with tremendous crashes over their heads, they were all hastening with one accord to the offered shelter of a beautiful large oak tree; but, by the persuasions of their master's brother, who happened to be with them, and who had heard of accidents frequently occurring from the attraction which trees afforded to the lightning, they were induced to forego their first intention, and to take shelter under some of the hay. Scarcely had they reached the hay, when they saw that tree, under which they had been so eager to shelter themselves, struck with the lightning, the large trunk split from the top to the bottom, and all the leaves blasted and withered. How merciful the Providence, that, by the instrumentality of this person, directed them away from the place of danger!

20. An Englishman gentleman, riding in company with his son, as they passed a part of the road lying near the edge of a precipice, the son involuntarily stopped his horse and alighted, saying, he could not proceed without solemnly returning thanks to the Most High for having at that spot, the last time he travelled the road, miraculously preserved his life, while his horse was dashed in pieces. His father instantly dismounted, adding, "If you have such cause of thanksgiving, what gratitude ought I to feel, who have passed this road a thousand times, and never once imagined I was in any danger!"

21. The Rev. Richard Boardman, one of the first ministers sent out to America by Mr Wesley, related, a short time before

his death, the following remarkable interposition of Divine Providence on his behalf:—"I preached one evening at Mould, in Flintshire, and next morning set out for Parkgate. After riding some miles, I asked a man if I was on the road to that place. He answered, 'Yes, but you will have some sands to go over, and, unless you ride fast, you will be in danger of being inclosed by the tide.' It then began to snow to such a degree that I could scarcely see a step of my way. I got to the sands, and pursued my journey over them for some time as rapidly as I could; but the tide then came in, and surrounded me on every side, so that I could neither proceed nor turn back, and to ascend the perpendicular rocks was impossible. In this situation, I commended my soul to God, not having the least expectation of escaping death. In a little time I perceived two men running down a hill on the other side of the water, and, by some means, they got a boat, and came to my relief, just as the sea had reached my knees, as I sat on my saddle. They took me into the boat, the mare swimming by our side, till we reached the land. While we were in the boat, one of the men said, 'Surely, sir, God is with you.' I answered, 'I trust he is.' The man replied, 'I know he is,' and then related the following circumstance:—'Last night I dreamed that I must go to the top of such a hill. When I awoke, the dream made such an impression on my mind that I could not rest. I therefore went, and called upon this man to accompany me. When we came to the place, we saw nothing more than usual. However, I begged him to go with me to another hill at a small distance, and there we saw your distressed situation.' When we got ashore, I went with my two friends to a public-house, not far distant from where we landed; and, as we were relating the wonderful providence, the landlady said, 'This day month we saw a gentleman just in your situation, but, before we could hasten to his relief, he plunged into the sea, supposing, as we concluded, that his horse would swim to the shore; but they both sank, and were drowned together. I gave my deliverers all the money I had, which, I think, was about eighteen pence, and tarried all night at the hotel. Next morning, I was a little embarrassed how to pay my reckoning for the want of cash, and begged my landlord would keep a pair of silver spurs till I should redeem them; but he answered, 'The Lord bless you, sir! I would not take a farthing from you for the world.' After some serious conversation with the friendly people, I bade them farewell, and recommenced my journey, rejoicing in the Lord, and praising him for his great salvation."

22. The Rev. Peter Mill, a zealous minister, travelling in Yorkshire, came to the brink of a large pit, which was so completely covered with the drifted snow as to conceal all danger from the unwary traveller. Just at that critical moment, when,

had he stepped forward, it is more than probable he would have plunged into the gulph of death, a young woman coming up discovered to him his perilous situation. Grateful to the *First Cause* of his deliverance, he was not unmindful of the *instrument* of it; and, desirous of making her some important return for the service she had rendered him, he informed her that he was a minister of Christ, whose office it was to call sinners to repentance; and, with much gratitude and earnestness, he exhorted her to flee from the wrath to come, entreating her seriously to consider that her youth was no security from death, and expressing a most ardent desire that he might be the means of saving her *soul* from the *more awful pit* than that from which she had been instrumental in saving his body. Such was the impression of his discourse on her mind, that she began earnestly to cry, "What must I do to be saved?" She soon obtained ease to her troubled conscience, and an assurance that her sins were pardoned; and, about eight weeks afterwards, she died happy in the consolations of religion.

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## PROVIDENTIAL DELIVERANCE FROM PERSECUTORS, ASSASSINS, ETC.

1. Augustine, going on one occasion to preach at a distant town, took with him a guide to direct him on the way. The man, by some unaccountable means, mistook the usual road, and fell into a by-path. It afterwards proved, that by this means his life had been saved, as some of the Donatists, who were his enemies, had waylaid him with the design of killing him.

2. One Mr Barbour, a Protestant, was, in the reign of Queen Mary, condemned to the flames. The morning of execution having arrived, the intended martyr walked to Smithfield, and was bound to the stake. The faggots were piled round him, and the executioner only waited for the word of command to apply the torch. Just at this crisis, tidings came of the Queen's death, which obliged the officers to stop their proceedings until the pleasure of the new queen (Elizabeth) should be known. In memory of so providential a deliverance, by which the good man was as *a brand plucked out of the fire*, he was no sooner released from his imprisonment and troubles than he got a picture of Queen Elizabeth made, decorated round with significant ornaments, and ordered in his will that the picture should be transmitted as a memorial to future times in the eldest branch of his family.

3. When the Rev. Bernard Gilpin was on his way to London to be tried before the Popish party, he broke his leg by a fal,

which put a stop for some time to his journey. The person in whose custody he was took occasion from the circumstance to retort upon him an observation he used frequently to make, "That nothing happens to us but what is intended for our good." He answered meekly, "He made no question but it was." And indeed so it proved; for before he was able to travel, Queen Mary died. Being thus providentially rescued, he returned to Houghton through crowds of people, expressing the utmost joy, and blessing God for his deliverance.

4. Mr John Knox, the celebrated Scottish Reformer, was accustomed to sit at the head of the table in his own house, with his back to the window; yet, on a certain night, such was the impression on his mind, that he would neither sit in his own chair, nor allow any other person to sit on it, but sat on another chair with his back to the table. That very night a bullet was shot in at the window, purposely to kill him, but the conspirators missed him. The bullet grazed the chair in which he used to sit, lighted on the candlestick, and made a hole in the foot of it, which, it is said, is yet to be seen. The Earl of Morton, who attended Mr Knox's funeral, when the corpse was put into the ground, said, "Here lies the body of him who, in his lifetime, never feared the face of man; and though often threatened with dag and dagger, hath ended his days in peace and honour."

5. Dr Peter Du Moulin, an eminent divine, fled from his persecutors during the dreadful Parisian massacre of St Bartholomew's day. The destruction of the Protestants was persevered in on this occasion for three successive days, during which, according to some computations, nearly a hundred thousand persons were barbarously slain. Du Moulin took refuge in an oven, over which a spider providentially wove her web. His pursuers actually came to the spot, but, perceiving the cobweb, they did not examine the interior, and the divine was preserved.

6. Joachim, a Novo Domo, chancellor of Bohemia, went to Vienna, and by great importunity procured a mandate from the Emperor Maximilian for the revival of a former persecuting ordinance against the brethren called Picards (also called Waldenses and Albigenses). Having obtained his commission, as he was leaving Vienna, and passing a bridge over the Danube, it fell, and Joachim and all his retinue fell into the river and were drowned, except six horsemen and one young nobleman, who, perceiving their lord in the water, caught hold of his gold chain, and held him up till some fishermen came to his assistance; but they found Joachim dead, and his box containing the persecuting mandate had sunk beyond recovery. The young nobleman was so affected by the hand of God in this affair, that he joined the brethren in their religion, and the persecution dropped.

7. Archbishop Bancroft having received information that Mr

Robert Parker, a puritan divine, was concealed in a certain citizen's house in London, immediately sent a person to watch the house, while others were prepared with a warrant to search for him. The person having fixed himself at the door, boasted that he had him now secure. Mr Parker at this juncture resolved to dress himself in the habit of a citizen, and venture out, whereby he might possibly escape; but if he remained in the house, he would be sure to be taken. Accordingly, in his strange garb he went forth; and God so ordered it, that, just at the moment of his going out, the watchman at the door spied his intended bride passing on the other side of the street, and while he just stepped over to speak to her, the good man escaped. When the officers came with the warrant to search the house, to their great mortification he could not be found. After this signal providential deliverance, he retired to the house of a friend in the neighbourhood of London, where a treacherous servant in the family gave information to the bishop's officers, who came and actually searched the house where he was; but, by the special providence of God, he was again most remarkably preserved; for the only room in the house which they neglected to search was that in which he was concealed, from whence he heard them swearing and quarrelling one with another; one protesting that they had not searched that room, and another as confidently asserting the contrary, and refusing to suffer it to be searched again. Had he been taken, he must have been cast into prison, where, without doubt, says the narrator, he must have died.

8. Dr Owen, during the persecuting times of Charles II., had gone down to visit his old friends in the neighbourhood of Oxford, and, adopting the usual precautions of the period, had approached his lodging after nightfall. But notwithstanding all his privacy, he was observed, and information given of the place where he lay. Early in the morning, a company of troopers came and knocked at the door. The mistress coming down, boldly opened the door, and asked them what they would have. "Have you any lodgers in your house?" they inquired. Instead of directly answering their question, she asked, "Whether they were seeking for Dr Owen?" "Yes," said they. On which she assured them he had departed that morning at an earlier hour. The soldiers, believing her word, immediately rode away. In the meantime the Doctor, whom the woman really supposed to have been gone, as he intended the night before, arose, and going into a neighbouring field, whither he ordered his horse to be brought to him, hastened away by an unfrequented path towards London.

9. During the sittings of the Union of the Evangelical Churches of France, in August 1849, a sermon was preached by a young man a few days previous to his ordination. The congregation was much annoyed and disturbed by a hostile and disorderly

crowd without. After the dismission of the church, a Bible belonging to one of the members was taken away, and, in a public part of the town (St Foy), committed to the flames in the midst of a furious crowd, who exulted in its destruction, and threatened the worshippers with a similar fate some day. It was a melancholy scene. Poor misguided creatures! What a brutalising system is Popery! What an enemy to every thing like religious liberty! But the most wonderful part of this story remains to be told. A fragment of the burned Bible escaped by something like special providence. On the following morning, when one of the members of the church visited the fatal spot with a sorrowful heart, he found among the ashes a small bit of a leaf, somewhat larger than half-a-crown, burnt all round the edges, but legible in the centre. And the verses upon both sides of this fragment were most remarkable. It was impossible to read them without being struck with astonishment. They were so suitable to the circumstances, that they seemed like a response from God himself, on the one hand, denouncing the folly and the wickedness of burning the Holy Scriptures, and, on the other, encouraging the members of the union to be steadfast in the hour of trial. On one side of the leaf were two verses of the first chapter of 1 Peter, viz., 22 and 23,—"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." Was not this like a voice out of the very fire declaring how vain it was to attempt the destruction of the Word of God? You may burn the Bible, but ten thousand fires cannot quench its voice; "it liveth and abideth for ever." On the other side were two verses and a half of the second chapter of 1 Peter, viz., 19, 20, and part of 21,—"For this is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto are ye called." "Was not this, too," adds Dr Lindsay, "like a voice from heaven, encouraging the synod to be faithful and steadfast under all the reproaches and calumnies to which they were exposed? This remarkable fragment of the burnt Bible was given to M. Monod, the president, who got it framed between two pieces of glass, and read it publicly in the church on Saturday, when it produced a very deep sensation. It was felt to be a message of comfort and encouragement from on high. Fervent prayer was at the same time offered up to God in behalf of the misguided men who had committed the Holy Scriptures to the flames; and blessings were invoked upon their heads, in

room of the curses which they had denounced upon the synod and its adherents."

10. During the early residence of the missionary, Kicherer, among the Hottentots, he was visited by a man who had been sentenced to death at the Cape of Good Hope, but had effected his escape, and who, making great pretensions to religion, imposed on Mr Kicherer, and induced him to receive him into his house. He slept in a room immediately adjoining that of the missionary, and rose during the night with the design of murdering him, and of making his escape with the property on the premises to a distant place. At the moment he was proceeding to the bedside of this good man, Mr Kicherer was suddenly awoke in a fit of terror, and unconsciously cried out, as though aware of the design of this wicked man, who in consequence became alarmed and fled.

11. A merchant one day returning from market on horseback, had behind him a valise filled with money. The rain fell with violence, and the good old man was wet to his skin. At this he was vexed, and murmured because God had given him such bad weather for his journey. On reaching the borders of a thick forest, what was his terror on beholding on one side of the road a robber, with levelled gun, aiming at him, and attempting to fire! But the powder being wet by the rain, the gun did not go off, and the merchant, spurring his horse, made his escape. "How wrong was I," said he to himself, "not to endure the rain patiently, as sent by Providence. If the weather had been dry and fair, I should not probably have been alive at this hour, and my little children would have expected my return in vain. The rain which caused me to murmur came at a fortunate moment to save my life and preserve my property."

12. A gentleman in an extensive line of business, in a distant part of the country, left his house with an intention of going to Bristol fair; but when he had proceeded about half way on his journey, he was seized with a violent fit of the stone, which detained him several days at the place, and as the fair was by this time nearly over, he was induced to return home. Some years after, the same gentleman happening to be on business at some place where the assizes for the county were held, was present at the execution of a criminal who was then about to suffer. Whilst he was mixed with the crowd, the criminal intimated a wish to speak with him, and signified that he had something to communicate to him. The gentleman approached, and was addressed to the following effect:—"Do you recollect having intended at such a time to go to Bristol fair?" "Yes," replied the gentleman; "perfectly well." "It is well you did not," said the criminal; "for it was the intention of myself and several others, who knew that you had a considerable sum of money about you,

to way-lay and rob, and, if I mistake not, murder you, to escape detection."

13. A poor woman near Edonderry, in Ireland, who owed her landlord £14, with difficulty was able to save only £7, which she brought him; but he absolutely refused to take less than the whole, yet detained her in talk till the evening; she then set out in a car. When she was within a mile of home, she overtook a soldier, who said he was exceedingly tired, and earnestly entreated her to let him ride with her on the car, to which she at length consented. When they came to her house, finding there was no town within two miles, he begged he might sit by the fireside till the morning. She told him she durst not suffer it, as her's was a lone house, and there was none in it but herself and her little girl; but at last she agreed he should lie in the girl's bed, and she and the girl would lie together. At midnight two men, who had blackened their faces, broke into the house and demanded her money. She said, "Then let me go into the next room and fetch it." Going in, she said to the soldier, "You have requited me well for my kindness by bringing your comrades to rob my house." He asked, "Where are they?" She said, "In the next room." He started up and ran thither. The men ran away with all speed; he fired after them and shot one dead, who, being examined, appeared to be her landlord; so that a soldier was sent to protect an innocent woman, and to punish a hardened villain.

14. Mr Ruggles, one of the American missionaries in the South Sea Islands, related the following anecdote respecting his father, who was a minister of the Gospel:—"One day, while he was preaching, a party of Indians came suddenly upon the congregation, scattered them, and carried him away into the forest. At night he was left under the charge of two women, while the men went to rest; but his female keepers, as well as the faithful dogs, falling asleep also, he took the opportunity to make his escape. He had not fled far before he heard the alarm-cry, and the clashing of the bushes behind warned him that the enemy were already in close pursuit of him. In his distress he crept, with little hope of safety, into a hollow tree, at whose foot there happened to be an opening through which he could squeeze his body, and stand upright within. The Indians soon rushed by in full chase, without stopping to search his retreat, and what is more extraordinary, their dogs had smelled about the root of the tree, and ran forward without barking, as they had discovered nothing.

15. A few years ago, a good man at Gravesend had retired to rest late on the Saturday night, having first secured the doors and windows of his house and shop. Weary, however, as he was with the labours of the week, he found it impossible to sleep, and having tossed about his bed for an hour or two without rest,

he resolved to come and spend an hour in the perusal of the Bible, as preparatory to the engagements of the Sabbath. He went down stairs with the Bible under his arm, and advancing towards one of the outer doors, he found several men who had broken into his house, and who, but for this singular interruption, would probably, in a very short period, have deprived him of the whole of his property. Unbroken sleep, in general, is a blessing, but sometimes the want of sleep is a mercy. The King of Persia was thus led to the knowledge of facts that in the end prevented the massacre of all the Jews in his empire, which had been decreed to take place.

16. A servant, belonging to Sir Henry Lee, had formed the design of murdering his master and robbing the house. On the night in which the dreadful deed was to be perpetrated, a dog, belonging to Sir Henry, which had never previously received any marks of attention, followed the knight up stairs to his bedchamber, and placed himself under his bed. This was quite an unusual movement, and the good knight, regarding it as an invasion, endeavoured to expel the intruder. Finding too much difficulty in the attempt it was abandoned, and the masterly cur was permitted to remain. In the dead of night the servant entered his master's room, in order to execute his horrid design, when he was instantly seized by the dog, and, being secured, confessed his guilty intention.

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## PROVIDENTIAL PREVENTION OF SUICIDE.

1. It is recorded of Mr John Dod, that one night, at a very late hour, he felt strongly moved to visit a gentleman of his acquaintance who lived at some distance. Not knowing what might be the design of Providence in this, he went. Having come to the house and knocked at the door, the gentleman himself opened it, to whom Mr Dod said, "I am come to you, I know not why myself, but I was restless in my spirit till I had done it." The gentleman replied, "You know not why you came, but God knew why he sent you." On which he pulled out the halter with which he intended to take away his own life, which, by this means, was happily prevented.

2. Cowper, the poet, who was subject to mental derangement, once resolved to throw himself into the Thames. For this reason he got into a hackney coach, and desired the man to drive him to Blackfriars' Bridge. The man drove all over London, but could not find the place. This was unaccountable, as the driver was well acquainted with London. "O!" said Cowper, "you

have driven me quite far enough, drive me home again." He went into his room and composed that beautiful hymn—

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform," &c.

3. A few years ago, a young gentleman, who had spent his fortune in riotous living, was reduced to poverty. For some time his friends supported him, but at length they all forsook him. When wandering about as a vagabond, he determined to terminate his miserable life by drowning himself. Being in a strange place, he put lead into his pockets, and went to the side of a river for this horrid purpose. Waiting till it was dark, that he might accomplish his design unperceived, he observed at a little distance a light in a house, and felt disposed to go to it. On his arrival there he heard persons singing psalms; he listened at the door while a chapter of the Bible was read, and a prayer offered up; he then wished for admission, and knocked gently at the door, which was opened by one of the company, who inquired what he wanted. He signified his desire of being admitted, but was told that it was not customary to receive strangers into their meetings; however, if he behaved decently he might come in. The passage of Scripture under consideration that evening was Acts xvi. 28—"Do thyself no harm." After several persons had made their remarks upon the subject, they concluded, as usual, with prayer. This they had no sooner done, than the stranger asked them how they came to know his thoughts, for he had not mentioned his intention to any person on earth. This surprised the whole company, who declared they had neither seen nor heard of him till that evening. He then told them of his design of taking away his life, and how he had been prevented by seeing a light in their window. This remarkable providence affected his mind to such a degree that, by the Divine blessing, it was made the means of his conversion; he became an eminent Christian, regained the favour of his friends, and lived in reputation and comfort.

4. An English clergyman, who had been preaching in a certain parish church on Sabbath, took a walk next day in the churchyard, and while engaged in reading the inscription on a tombstone of a departed saint, he observed a woman passing by the churchyard, whom he called to him, and desired to read the lines which had so delightfully affected his own heart. She did so; but told him they contained nothing suitable to her, for that she had no interest in the blood of Jesus. He requested her to read them again; but she answered as before, that the blood of Christ brought no benefit to her. Being under much concern for the woman, the clergyman asked her where she lived; and she told him that it was at the distance of nearly three miles and a half. He called on her a few days afterwards, and found her in the

deepest distress, having a mother dying of old age, and two children ill of the small-pox, without any means of support or relief. He took occasion, from their afflictive circumstances, to impress upon them a sense of the wise and gracious dealings of God in all his dispensations towards his helpless creatures; and after recommending their souls and bodies to the mercy of God and the care of his providence, he gave them a few religious books, and a little pecuniary assistance, and took an affectionate leave of them. About twelve months after this, the clergyman again visited the same parish, when he preached as before, and the following day he went to the poor woman's house to learn the condition of the family. As he drew near, the woman saw him, and knew him, and, with pleasure in her countenance, went forth to meet him. After expressing her gratitude for his former kindness, she informed him, that at the time he saw her pass by the churchyard, and called her to read the inscription on the tombstone, she had been to ask help of her brother, who kept a draper's shop in the village; but his unnatural refusal, with the prospect of its sad consequences to her mother, had thrown her into such a state of distraction and despondency, that she was hastening to a neighbouring river with a determination to drown herself. She further informed him, that soon after his late visit one of her children died, and the other was restored to health, and that, about the same time, God had blotted out all her transgressions. She said that she had been happy in his favour ever since, and that her mother died six months after, in the full assurance of future blessedness.

5. The commander of a revenue cutter, a most profligate man, having attempted self-murder, was prevented by his wife, who was a pious woman, from committing the fatal deed. With considerable difficulty, she prevailed on him to accompany her to the church. The minister, not knowing the circumstances, was led, in the course of his sermon, to describe the case of a wretched sinner, who, under the pressure of extreme trouble and disappointment, and with the delusive hope of an expeditious release from his painful feelings, dares to plunge himself into remediless wo!—who, to effect this dreadful purpose, has recourse to a knife, to a rope, to a pistol, &c. All this was listened to by the stranger with astonishment, who, whispering to his wife, said, "You have been telling this gentleman." A happy change took place on this once profane, abandoned sinner. His house and cabin became temples of God, and having joined the church, together with his wife, henceforth walked in all the commandments and ordinances of God blameless.

6. A gentleman of respectable family, while travelling on Long Island, indulged repeatedly in drinking ardent spirits, contrary, it would seem, to his usual practice; and, before he was aware,

he became intoxicated. Deeply mortified in finding himself in this situation, he resolved, in a rash moment, to destroy himself, and for this purpose retired to the woods. After finding a suitable place, he took from his hat the handkerchief with which he intended to execute his dreadful purpose; but, providentially, with the handkerchief, he drew out from his hat a little tract which arrested his attention. It had on the title page, "A Word in Season." He perused it; it struck conviction to his heart; he instantly fell on his knees, cried to God to have mercy on him, and after continuing some time in earnest prayer, arose, and made his way to a neighbouring house, where happily a pious Christian dwelt. Here he gave no sleep to his eyes, but spent the whole night in prayer. In the morning he returned to the city, thanking God for the deliverance he had effected through the instrumentality of the "Word in Season."

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### PROVIDENTIAL INTERPOSITION IN THE CONVERSION OF SINNERS, OR COMFORT OF SAINTS.

1. It was customary, in Cromwell's time, for his soldiers to carry each a Bible in his pocket; among others, a profligate young man, who was ordered out to attack some fortress. During the engagement a bullet had perforated his Bible, and gone so far as to rest opposite these words in Ecclesiastes—"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment." These words, so appropriate to his case, powerfully affected his mind, and proved, by the blessing of God, the means of his conversion. He used to observe, that the Bible had been the happy means of saving both his soul and his body.

2. The late Rev. John Pattison, of Edinburgh, having occasion to preach on a Sabbath-day in Dundee, had, previously to his leaving home, laid aside, and ordered to be packed up with some other necessary articles, a certain note-book, which contained a sermon on which the good man had bestowed considerable pains, and which, he hoped, might not be unacceptable to a congregation of Christians, who then enjoyed the stated labours of the late excellent Mr M'Ewen. On his arrival in Dundee, however, which was not till the Saturday evening, and on examining the contents of his saddle-bags, he found the note-book wanting, nor had any other been substituted in its place. He was, therefore, late as it was, obliged to make choice of a new subject, and to cast his thoughts together upon it, in the best manner he could; and, after all his pains, and all his prayers, was not a little appre-

hensive that such defective preparation would not only affect the respectability of his appearance in the pulpit, but in some measure mar the success of his work. "Not by might," however, "not by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." It happened, in adorable providence, on the afternoon of Sabbath, that a poor fishwoman, notorious for clamour and profanity, stumbled into the meeting, and felt the sermon, particularly at the application, come home with such life and peculiar energy to her soul, as instantly to produce the most happy effects on the disposition of her heart and tenor of her conduct. On Monday she attended with her fish-basket as usual; but, O how changed! Instead of her former noise and profanity, she was quiet and calm as a lamb—instead of asking from her customers double or triple the value of her fish, she spoke to them with discretion, and told the lowest price at once. Surprised at this new behaviour of the woman, some who were present, judging she might be indisposed, began to inquire for her health. One of them in particular said to her, "Dear Margaret, what is the matter with you? you are not at all as you used to be." "No," replied Margaret, "and I hope I never shall. It pleased God to lead me yesterday to Mr M'Ewen's meeting-house, where I heard words I will never forget, and found something come over me, the like of which I never knew before." The woman lived to give the most satisfactory evidence of the soundness of her conversion, by a walk and conversation becoming the gospel.

3. The conversion of Dr Vanderkemp was preceded by a very remarkable interposition of the providence of God in the preservation of his life. He was sailing on the river near Dort, in company with his wife and daughter, when a violent storm arose, and a waterspout broke on the boat, by which it was instantly overset. Mrs Vanderkemp and her daughter were immediately drowned, and the survivor, clinging to the boat, was carried down the stream nearly a mile, no one daring, in so dreadful a storm, to venture from the shore to his assistance. A vessel, then lying in the port of Dort, was, by the violence of the storm, driven from her moorings, and floated towards the part of the river in which he was, just ready to perish, and the sailors took him from the wreck. Thus remarkably was a life preserved, which was afterwards to be employed for the advantage of mankind, and for the propagation of that faith which he had laboured to destroy. The sudden loss of his earthly comforts, and his long struggle against a painful death, softened his hard heart, shook the infidel principles he had hitherto cherished, and ended in the consecration of his life to the cause of God.

4. Lady Huntingdon once spoke to a workman who was repairing a garden wall, and pressed him to thoughtfulness on the state of his soul. Some years afterwards she was speaking to another

man on the same subject, and said, "Thomas, I fear you never pray, nor look to Jesus Christ for salvation." "Your ladyship is mistaken," answered the man; "I heard what passed between you and James at such a time, and the word you designed for him took effect on me." "How did you hear it?" "I heard it on the other side of the garden, through a hole in the wall, and shall never forget the impression I received."

5. A Sabbath-school ticket was one day dropped in the street by a scholar in Petersburg, a town in North America. A lady, passing that way in her carriage perceived it on the ground, and, supposing it to be a treasury note, or small bill, such as were then used for change, ordered her servant to bring it to her. He did so; but instead of its representing a small amount of earthly treasure, she found upon it the following words:—"What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" The inquiry was deeply impressed upon her mind, and in vain did she attempt to banish it. In vain she sought the circles of folly and dissipation, the thought still pressed upon her mind,—"What shall it profit?" nor did she ever find rest till she was brought to the feet of Jesus.

6. A clergyman in North Carolina mentions the case of a young infidel in that State, who was walking by the side of a pond, when he discovered two leaves of a book, partly in the water, which he took up, and soon perceived another fragment lying at a little distance before him, and still farther on a third. He took up the whole, and putting them together, they composed an entire tract, the perusal of which so arrested his attention, that he read it again and again; and such were the impressions created in his mind, that he felt an unconquerable desire to read the Bible. He was ashamed that this wish should be known to any one, and devised a plan for procuring a Bible in his grandmother's bookcase. He went and paid her a visit, and while looking at and praising her library, secured the Bible for himself; returned home, and read it in secret; embraced the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour, and is now a member of the Christian church, and an active Christian.

7. A ship was wrecked amongst the rocks near Cape Horn, when only one seaman reached a lonely, barren rock, where he remained three days and nights without food or shelter. He had hitherto neglected the claims of religion, and was a stranger to its joys. He now, however, in his perilous and forlorn circumstances, began to think about *God* and *eternity*, his past life, and the interests of his soul; but all was dark. He had never prayed, nor did he know how to pray. A single commandment, taught him by his mother when he was a child, was all he remembered. He lifted his feeble hands towards heaven, and there, on that lonely rock, far from home and friends, he submitted all to God,

and most solemnly promised, if his life should be spared, he would *learn* and do whatever God required. From that happy hour peace flowed into his soul—Christ was his Saviour, and hope entered within the veil. Providentially the next day the life-boat from a passing ship took him from the rock. Having landed at Boston, he received a Bible, which he read with prayerful attention. He came to New York, visited different churches, searched for truth, remembered his solemn vow, was admitted into the Baptist church, and *went on his way rejoicing.*

8. Dr Owen, when a young man, having been for a considerable time in distress of mind, went one Lord's day, with a cousin of his, to hear Mr Calamy, a celebrated preacher in London. From some occurrence, Mr Calamy was prevented from preaching that day. Being uncertain whether there would be any sermon at all, Dr Owen was solicited by his relation to go and hear another eminent minister, Mr Jackson. Being indisposed to go farther, however, he kept his seat, resolving, if no minister came, to return to his lodgings. After waiting some time, a country minister came up to the pulpit, a stranger not only to Dr Owen, but to the congregation, who, having prayed earnestly, took for his text these words, Matt. viii. 26—"Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" The very reading of the words surprised Dr Owen, on which he secretly put up a prayer, that God would be pleased, by the minister, to speak to his case. And his prayer was heard; for in that sermon the minister was directed to answer those very objections which he had commonly formed against himself; and though he had formerly given the same answers to himself without effect, yet now the time was come when God designed to speak peace to his soul; and the sermon (though otherwise a plain, familiar discourse) was blessed for the removing of all his doubts, and laid the foundation of that solid peace and comfort which he afterwards enjoyed as long as he lived.

9. Dr Staunton, once supping at an inn between London and Oxford, in company with many fellow-travellers, one of them indulged much in foolish and profane discourse. Dr Staunton spoke to him, and laboured to convince him of the evil of sin, and of the curse and wrath of God, which did hang over his head; and afterwards he unfolded unto him the exceeding riches of God's grace to repenting sinners, and his readiness to receive them through Christ Jesus. Upon this the person became more silent, but what farther effect the reproof had upon him we are not informed. The discovery of the riches of divine grace made upon this occasion, however, greatly affected a young scholar, who was present. It melted his heart, and, under the divine blessing, was a means of delivering him from a spirit of bondage, under which he had been labouring for some months.

10. During the ministry of the late Mr Willison of Dundee, a

serious woman, who had been hearing him preach from Psalm lv. 22—"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee,"—came to his house in the evening, with a broken and oppressed mind, in order to make known to him her perplexed case. The poor woman, as she passed through the house to his room, heard a little girl repeating the text, which came with such power to her heart as effectually dispelled her fears, and set her at liberty. When she was introduced to Mr W., she told him that she was come to make known her distress, but the Lord, by means of his grandchild repeating the text as she came through the house, had graciously dispelled her fears, and removed her burden, and now she only desired to give thanks for her spiritual recovery.

11. A pious old man was one day walking to the house of God with a New Testament in his hand, when a friend met him, and said, "Good morning, Mr Price." "Ah! good morning," replied he, "I am reading my Father's will as I walk along." "Well, and what has he left you?" said his friend. "Why, he has bequeathed to me a hundredfold more in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting." This beautiful reply was the means of comforting his Christian friend, who was at the time in sorrowful circumstances.

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## PROVIDENTIAL INTERPOSITION IN ANSWER TO PRAYER.

1. It is well known that many of the good men who were driven from this country to America, by persecution, in the seventeenth century, had to endure great privations. In the month of June 1623, their hopes of a harvest were nearly blasted by drought, which withered up their corn, and made their grass look like hay. All expected to perish with hunger. In their distress they set apart a day for humiliation and prayer, and continued their worship for eight or nine hours. God heard their prayers, and answered them in a way which excited universal admiration. Although the morning of that day was clear, and the weather very hot and dry during the whole forenoon, yet before night it began to rain, and gentle showers continued to fall for many days, so that the ground became thoroughly soaked, and the drooping corn revived.

2. The magistrates of Seven-oaks in Kent sent their officers to the congregation of Mr William Jeffrey, a puritan minister, then meeting at Bradburn, who took all the men into custody, and carried them up to the town, where they were kept prisoners during the night. The following day when the justices were assembled, the prisoners were brought before them, and they underwent an examination, after which they were dismissed. They all, with

one heart, full of wonder and joy, returned to the meeting-house, whence they were carried, to return their united thanks to God for this unexpected deliverance. When they entered the place, to their great surprise and inexpressible joy, they found the women there, who had not departed from the house of God, but spent the whole night, and following morning, in fasting and prayer to God in their behalf.

3. The Rev. Edward Snape, having been cast into prison by the bishops for nonconformity, and all his money being expended by his long confinement, he met with much unkind usage from the jailor. The good man being one day on his knees in fervent prayer to God, and the window of his chamber being open, observed something thrown into the room; but he resolved to finish his prayer before he examined what it was. When he rose from his knees, he found to his great surprise, a purse full of gold lying on his chamber floor. By this unexpected supply, he was more comfortable in his situation, and enabled to make his keeper *better natured* ever after. The Lord heareth the young ravens when they cry; how much more will he hear his afflicted people!

4. Mr Alexander Peden, a Scottish covenanter, with some others, had been, at one time, pursued, both by horse and foot, for a considerable way. At last, getting some little height between them and their persecutors, he stood still, and said, "Let us pray here, for if the Lord hear not our prayer and save us, we are all dead men." He then prayed, saying, "O Lord, this is the hour and power of thine enemies; they may not be idle. But hast thou no other work for them than to send them after us? Send them after them to whom thou wilt gi'e strength to flee, for our strength is gane. Twine them about the hill, O Lord, and cast the lap of thy cloak over puir auld Saunders, and thir puir things, and save us this a'e time, and we will keep it in remembrance, and tell, to the commendation of thy guidness, thy pity, and compassion, what thou didst for us at sic a time." And in this he was heard, for a cloud of mist immediately intervened between them and their persecutors; and in the mean time, orders came to go in quest of James Renwick, and a great company with him.

5. The Rev. Oliver Heywood, who was one of the ministers ejected in 1662, was, after the loss of his regular income, reduced to great straits, so that his children were sometimes wanting food. On one of these occasions, he called a servant, who adhered to the family in its adversity, and said, "Martha, take a basket, and go to Halifax, call upon Mr N——, a shopkeeper, and request him to lend me five shillings. If he is kind enough to do it, buy such things as you know we most want. The Lord give you good speed; and, in the mean time, we will offer up our requests to Him who feedeth the young ravens when they cry." Martha then went, but approaching the house her courage failed her, and she passed

the door again and again, without going in to tell her errand. Mr N—— at length called her to him, and asked her if she was not Mr Heywood's servant. On her replying in the affirmative, he said, "I am glad to see you, as some friends have given me five guineas for your master, and I was just thinking how I could send them." She now burst into tears, told her errand, and received the money, with a request that, should the family be again placed in similar circumstances, she would come to him again. She procured the needful provisions, and returned home; the children eagerly examined the basket, while their father heard the servant's narrative, and gratefully said, "The Lord hath not forgotten to be gracious; his word is true from the beginning; they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing."

6. The Rev. Hansard Knollys, after having fled to America, in consequence of being prosecuted in the High Commission Court, returned to England, at the desire of his aged father, and lived some time in obscurity in London. While in London, he says, "I was still poor, and sojourned in a lodging, till I had but sixpence left, and knew not how to provide for my wife and child; but having prayed to God, and encouraged my wife to trust in God, and to remember former experiences, and especially, that word of promise which God had given us, and would perform to us (Heb. xiii. 5), I paid for my lodging, and went out, not knowing whither God's good hand of providence would lead me, to receive something towards my present subsistence; and about seven or eight doors from my lodgings a woman met me in the street, and told me she came to seek me; that her husband sent her to tell me, that there was a lodging provided and prepared in his house, by some Christian friends, for me and my wife. I told her my present condition, and went along with her to my house, and there she gave me twenty shillings, which Dr Bastwick (a late sufferer) had given her for me, and some linen for my wife; which I received, and told her and her husband, I would fetch my wife and child and lodge there; and so I returned with great joy. My wife was very much affected with this kind interposition of Providence; being so suitable and seasonable a supply to us. She said, 'O dear husband, how sweet it is to live by faith, and trust God's faithful word!—Let us rely upon him whilst we live, and trust him in all straits.'"

7. Mr M——, a pious and zealous curate in Yorkshire, was in circumstances of pecuniary distress; but at the same time, he had frequent experience of the Lord's goodness to his family in their straits. Once, when in great want of the necessaries of life, a five-guinea note was sent them by the carrier, but from whom, they never could learn. On another occasion, their stock, both of coals and money, was exhausted. Having no prospect of a supply, they retired to rest that evening, "cast down, but not in

despair." In the morning, after praying with his wife, Mr M—— took a walk out on the highway, still continuing the devout exercise of prayer, when he was met by the post. Without being able to assign a reason why, he felt an impression which led him to ask, "Have you a letter for me?" to which the person replied in the affirmative. Upon receiving the letter, he immediately opened it, and found it to be an anonymous epistle, with five pounds enclosed. Soon after this, a friend brought a cow for their service; and towards evening, another friend sent them a cart-load of coals. Thus, without making known their case to any one, except the Lord God of Elijah, they received in one day a seasonable supply of money, milk, and coals.

8. In a large and populous village in Yorkshire, lived a poor but pious man, whose Christian name was Jonathan, and who had a wife with several children to support. During the time of harvest, while employed in gathering the fruits of the earth, he accidentally slipped from the top of a barley-mow, and sprained one or both of his ancles; in consequence of which he was unable to work. His family being much reduced, his wife on one occasion went up stairs into his room weeping. "What is the matter?" said Jonathan; "what is distressing thee?" "Why, the children are crying for something to eat, and I have nothing to give them," was the affecting reply. "Hast thou faith in God?" asked Jonathan. "Dost thou believe in his providence, and in his word? Has he not said, 'Bread shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure?' Kneel down," he continued, "at the bedside, and pray to God. Tell him how thy children are circumstanced; that they have no bread; that thou hast nothing wherewith to buy them any; and I will also pray. Who can tell what God may do? He heareth prayer."—Jonathan and his wife prayed earnestly together; they pleaded the promises of God and waited the result. Soon after a person from the immediate neighbourhood came to the door with a loaf of bread. No sooner did the good woman receive the loaf, than she ran to Jonathan to tell him how God had answered their prayer. "Now," said he, "before any thing else be done, kneel down at the bed-side, and return thanks to God for having heard our prayer." She did so; they praised his name together; and then ate their food with gladness, and with singleness of heart. Not many hours elapsed before another kind interposition of Providence presented itself. A second visitor brought them a joint of meat. When this was told Jonathan, he replied to his wife, "Aye; see! God is now better than his word! He promised bread, and he sends flesh in addition. Kneel down and thank him again."

9. A poor, but pious widow, residing at Folkestone, derived support for herself and her family by selling grocery and other small articles. She was at one time much distressed for a sum

of money to meet a bill, the payment of which her creditor had demanded. The day and the hour arrived when the claim would be made, which she was unable to meet. She sought the kind interposition of her Heavenly Father, and just then she heard footsteps in her little shop; she expected to meet the eye of her creditor; but to her great surprise, about twenty sailors made their appearance, who purchased articles to the very amount she now wanted, and thus converted her prayer to praise, encouraging her more than ever to exercise confidence in Him who has said, "Let thy widows trust in me."

10. "In the year 1764," says the Rev. Mr Pawson, "there was an extraordinary drought in the middle of summer, so that the pasture-grounds were exceedingly burned, and the meadows also began to suffer much from the extreme heat of the weather; and what was still more distressing, in many places there were such swarms of caterpillars, that they devoured all before them, and left the ground behind them nearly as bare as the high road. They cut the grass off close to the roots, and then devoured it; so that they cleared the ground as they passed along. The country people were seriously alarmed, and the farmers used a variety of means to destroy them. But all their attempts were in vain; there were such astonishing numbers of them, that they covered the face of the earth where they came. Our people at the New Mills, in Derbyshire, kept a day of fasting and prayer on this distressing occasion; for the fruits of the earth were in danger of being utterly destroyed. This was on Wednesday, and they continued in prayer the whole day. On Thursday, the drought continued just the same; so that their ungodly neighbours laughed them to scorn, and said, God has not regarded your prayer! On Friday, in the afternoon, I was upon a short journey, and came into that neighbourhood; and I well remember the weather was exceedingly hot indeed. There was not a cloud upon the skies, but the heavens were as clear as possible; and I never saw a greater prospect of continued drought in all my life. Yet, notwithstanding this, before noon the heavens were covered with clouds, and the Lord sent abundance of rain, to the inexpressible joy of the people. But still the caterpillars continued; and how they should be delivered from them, they knew not. However, the Lord sent a whole army of crows, and they soon cleared the ground of them, to the astonishment of the inhabitants."

11. The Rev. Dr Lathrop of America, illustrating in a sermon the sentiment, that "God often answers prayer in a way we do not expect," introduced the following facts:—"A poor African negro was led, while in his own country, by the consideration of the works of Nature, to a conviction of the existence and benevolence of a Supreme Being. Impressed with this fact, he used daily to pray to this Great Being, that by some means or other

he might more distinctly know him. About this time he was taken, with many others, and sold for a slave. For a while he hesitated as to the view he had taken of God, and thought that if there did indeed exist a just and good Being as he had supposed, he would not allow fraud and iniquity to prevail against innocence and integrity. But after a while this poor slave was introduced into a pious family in New England, where he was instructed in Christianity, and enabled to rejoice in God as his friend. He was now persuaded of the fact, that adverse providences are often the means of answering our prayers, and conducting us to the greatest happiness.

12. Mr P——, a pious minister in England relates, in a letter to a friend, that being at one time in great want of money, and knowing not to whom he should apply for aid, he betook himself to prayer, committing his case to the Lord, and seeking direction from him. In a day or two after, a servant called, telling him, that a gentleman wished him to dine with him at N——. The gentleman had come from B——, after his marriage, to see Mr P——, as he had been formerly acquainted with him. He presented the minister with ten pounds as a marriage present, which relieved him from his embarrassments, and filled him with gratitude to God for so seasonable a supply of his wants.

13. A pious couple, in a small way of trade, were once very much embarrassed for want of a small sum of money, which they did not know where or how to procure. As they sat one day at breakfast (affairs appearing likely to draw to a close very soon), their difficulty of course became the subject of their conversation. The husband said, "My dear, there appears to be no way but to look upwards. Let us therefore *now* apply to God in prayer about it." They accordingly both kneeled down immediately. Many sentences had not been offered in prayer, before a person knocked at the door. The man went and opened it; and he found that one of their best customers had called for several articles; and, without hesitation, he laid out with them exactly the sum they so greatly wanted.

14. The late Mr James Meikle of Carnwath, when employed as surgeon's-mate, on board the Portland man-of-war ship at Leghorn, had occasion to remark the interposition of Providence in a very singular manner in his behalf. Several of the gentlemen belonging to the ship had formed a party in order to visit the city of Pisa, which is about twelve miles distant, and entertain themselves with the sight of its famous hanging towers, and the other curiosities of the place. Mr Meikle, starting on the morning of the 12th of April, went on foot by himself, and enjoyed, he says, by the way, "pleasant meditations on the love of Christ;" the rest followed on horseback. The afternoon was far advanced before they had sufficiently gratified their curiosity. In

the evening Mr Meikle's companions returned; but he being fatigued and observing that the wind was foul, so that the fleet which the Portland was to convey could not sail, ventured to remain in Pisa. Early next morning, he set out for Leghorn; but the wind had changed during the night, and before he could reach the city, the fleet had weighed, and were already several leagues on their way.

By this occurrence he was thrown into great perplexity. In a strange place, ignorant of the language, with no clothes except what were on his body, with little money in his pocket, without one personal acquaintance, and even few Englishmen being left in the place, to take interest in the distresses of their countryman; afraid, besides, of the fate of his papers and other property on board, of the loss of what was due to him on the ship's books, and of being detained long before he could find an opportunity of getting home; what was to be done? In his distress he applied to the English Consul; but every expedient suggested by him and some others whom he consulted, misgave. After thus spending the remainder of Friday, and the whole of Saturday, in fruitless contrivances how to extricate himself from the embarrassment of his situation, the Sabbath came, on which he resolved as much as possible to banish care, and to commit himself to God. Early on the morning, therefore, of the sacred day (15th April 1759), with his Bible in his pocket, he retired to a forest at a considerable distance from the town, and spent the day in devotional exercises. He sung the sixty-third psalm, "a psalm written in a wilderness, which," says he, "gave me great comfort in my wilderness." He read the hundred and second psalm, which "well suits the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord." He engaged repeatedly in prayer, and in meditation on God, and the dispensations of his providence towards his people, and himself in particular. As the day advanced the wind sprung up, and it began to rain. He took shelter from the storm in the trunk of a hollow tree, and standing within it, wrote the following lines:—

"A stranger in a foreign land,
I throw myself on thee;
There's help in that Almighty Hand
That made both land and sea.

"Though far from friends, and far from home,
I am not far from God:
He will not stand aloof; he'll come,
And surely do me good.

"Upon thy power, Lord, I will lean;
Why should I bound thy ways?
Thy power the hardest things can bring
To pass with greatest ease.

"Oft have I seen thy former love,
Still I will I trust in thee;
Thou can'st not cease from heaven above
Kindly to look on me.

"How to relieve thou always know'st,
Thou art as wise as true;
And what infinite wisdom plans,
Infinite power can do.

"Why doubt my Father's love? for though
His providence now frown,
To me with kindness overflow
His word and ways each one.

"The world is thine; and every where
Thou'rt present, O Most High!
I cast myself upon thy care;
I on thy word rely."

Faint and hungry, he returned to the city, and calling at a house to which he was kindly invited, he had not sat long before information was brought him that the English fleet had been driven back by contrary winds, and were arrived in the Roads. Animated by this delightful but unexpected intelligence of an event which so evidently marked the care of Providence, he made all possible haste towards the shore; but it was late, it blew hard, and it was morning before he could get aboard. As he rowed towards the ship it fell calmer, the wind became fair, the signal for sailing was hoisted; and, within two hours after he entered the Portland, the fleet were under weigh with a fair wind and a fresh gale.

"This interposition of Providence for me," says Mr Melkle, "was astonishing; that God should send a contrary gust of wind out of his treasuries, and turn a whole fleet out of their intended course for one poor worm! and, whenever that end was accomplished, ordered a fair wind to blow, so that we were obliged to put back no more." It appears to have struck even the thoughtless sailors with surprise; for they hailed him as he approached the vessel, in their rough and irreligious manner, "Come along, you praying d——l;" adding that the winds would not permit them to leave Leghorn without him.

15. The Rev. John Newton, referring to his settlement in Liverpool, as tide-surveyor, says, "When I think of my settlement here, and the manner of it, I see the appointment of Providence so good and gracious, and such a plain answer to my poor prayers, that I cannot but wonder and adore. I think I have not yet told you, that my immediate predecessor in office, Mr C——, had not the least intention of resigning his place on the occasion of his father's death, though such a report was spread about the town without his knowledge, or rather in defiance of all he could say to contradict it. Yet, to this false report I owe

my situation. For it put Mr M—— upon an application to Mr S——, the member for the town; and, the very day he received the promise in my favour, Mr C—— was found dead in his bed, though he had been in company, and in perfect health, the night before. If I mistake not, the same messenger who brought the promise, carried back the news of the vacancy to Mr S—— at Chester. About an hour after, the Mayor applied for a nephew of his; but, though it was only an hour or two, he was too late. Mr S—— had already written and sent off the letter; and I was appointed accordingly. These circumstances appear to me extraordinary, though of a piece with many other parts of my singular history. And the more so, as by another mistake I missed the land-waiter's place, which was my first object, and which I now see would not have suited us nearly so well. I thank God I can now look through instruments and second causes, and see his wisdom and goodness immediately concerned, in fixing my lot."

16. About the time when the gospel was beginning to make its way in Raiatea, one of the South Sea Islands, a canoe, with four men in it, was upset at sea, and the people were thrown into the water. Two of the men, having embraced Christianity, immediately cried, "Let us pray to Jehovah, for he can save us." "Why did you not pray to him sooner?" replied their Pagan comrades; "here we are in the water, and it is useless to pray now." The Christians, however, did cry mightily unto their God, while all four were clinging for life to the broken canoe. In this situation, a shark suddenly rushed towards them, and seized one of the two idolaters. His companions held him as fast and as long as they could, but the monster prevailed in the tug between them, and hurried the unfortunate victim into the abyss, marking the track with his blood. After some time the tide bore the surviving three to the reef, when, just as they were cast upon it, a second shark snatched the other idolater with his jaws, and carried off his prey, shrieking in vain for assistance, which the two Christians, themselves struggling with the breakers, could not afford him. This circumstance made a great impression on the minds of their countrymen, and powerfully recommended to them the "God that heareth prayer."

17. A minister in New York stated, that during the hard time of the winter of 1839, three daughters of a poor widow were in want of food, and requested their mother to supply them. She told them she had no bread in the house, nor any money to buy it with, and that they must go out and try to beg some. These little girls had attended a Sabbath school, and recollected that their teacher once told them, if they wanted any needful thing, they should pray to God for it, and if he saw it was good for them he would give it to them. They stepped aside and sat down, and

sang one of their Sabbath-school hymns; then the oldest one prayed to God to pity their hunger, and send them some bread. A lady passing by at the time saw them, and inquired what they were doing. They told her the simple story, when she said, "Come with me." She led them to a baker's shop, gave each of them a loaf of bread, inquired where they lived, and afterwards provided for their wants. Let this encourage poor children to look to God in time of trouble and necessity.

18. A female servant, named Mary, a pious woman, heard her master and mistress one day complaining that trade was so bad, that if their shop did not soon answer better, they must close it. Mary was much concerned; and at night was overheard by her mistress in prayer, as follows:—"O Thou, that directest the foot of the buyer to the shop of the seller, direct customers to my master's house." The prayer was heard; business returned; her master grew rich; and Mary was remembered in his will.

19. The daughter of a very eminent Christian, and a deacon of the Baptist Church at Birmingham, in England, married a respectable merchant of the city of Bristol, distant from each other about a hundred miles; and, at a subsequent period, such was the will of Providence, by one sudden and unexpected loss at sea, he was nearly ruined. This news gave such a shock to his amiable companion, that she was rendered altogether insane, and that to such a degree, that it was necessary to confine her in order to prevent her from doing herself and others harm. Her distressed situation was immediately communicated by letter to her father, who, on receiving it, like one of old, "conferred not with flesh and blood," but presented the case before his Heavenly Father; and in the evening gathered together at his house many of his brethren in the church, for the purpose of pleading with God in her behalf. It was a season of solemn and united supplication to the Lord. He answered prayer; for a few days afterwards a letter was received by her father, informing him that on such an hour her reason returned, she sat up in bed, her bands of confinement were removed, and she was, as it were, in an instant restored to her usual health. That evening and that hour of restoration were the *same evening and the same hour* when many were gathered together, and prayer was made unto God for her.

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## PROVIDENTIAL REWARD OF LIBERALITY.

1. "One help to my success," says Mr Richard Baxter, "was the relief which my estate enabled me to afford to the poor. The situation which I held was reckoned at nearly £200 per annum, but there came only from £80 to £90 to hand; besides

which, some years I had £60 or £80 a-year from the booksellers for my books which I wrote. This little, dispersed among them, much reconciled them to the doctrine that I taught. I took the aptest of their children from the school, and sent divers of them to the universities, where, for £8 a-year, or £10 at most, by the help of my friends, I maintained them. In giving the little I had, I did not inquire if they were good or bad when they asked relief, for the bad had souls and bodies that needed charity most. And this truth I will speak, for the encouragement of the charitable, that what little money I have by me now, I got it almost all, I scarcely know how, *at that time when I gave most;* and since I have had less opportunity of giving, I have had less increase."

2. The Rev. John Brown, of Haddington, took a deep interest in the Associate congregation at North Berwick, which he was mainly instrumental in forming. As his son, the Rev. Ebenezer Brown, of Inverkeithing, and he, were riding to the ordination of Mr Scrimgeour, their first minister, he said, "Eben, this is a poor congregation, and you should be as liberal as you can on this occasion. Once I gave them five pounds, perhaps it was more than I could well afford, but the Lord soon repaid me, by inducing a Mrs —— to leave me a legacy of twenty pounds, the only one I ever received." Ebenezer was led by this recommendation to contribute perhaps also more than he was easily able; but, in a few days afterwards, as he was riding through Musselburgh, he heard one calling after him, when a Mr Thomson, a relation of his mother's, informed him that a sum of money had been left for him, and this was for a debt never expected to be paid. These incidents, and the occasional recommendations of his father to spare nothing for the cause of Christ, it is believed, tended to form in him those feelings which led him, to the utmost extent of his ability, to contribute to the extension of the gospel in the world.

3. "A year last November," says a missionary agent, "I preached a missionary sermon in the town of ——, and took a subscription. A physician subscribed and paid five dollars. A gentleman standing by told me that the five dollars were all he had, or was worth—that he had lost his property, paid up his debts, and moved into town to commence practice, with no other resources than that five-dollar bill. He and his wife were obliged to board out, as he was not able to keep house. I resolved at once that I would keep watch of that man, and see what the Lord would do with him. About a year after this interview I visited the place again, and put up with this physician. I found him keeping house in good style. In conversation with him I brought up the duty of Christian benevolence, and spoke of God's faithfulness to fulfil his promises to the liberal. He told me he knew a physician who, the last year, gave away the last five dollars he had in the world, resolving to trust the Lord for the fu-

ture. During the next summer, while the cholera raged in the country, by a series of events, guided, as he believed, by the providence of God, most of the practice was thrown into the hands of this physician, and he had taken more than 2500 dollars. I told him I knew him to be the man referred to, and that I had been keeping watch to see what the Lord would do with him."

4. A minister soliciting aid towards his chapel, waited upon an individual distinguished for his wealth and benevolence. Approving of the case, he presented to the minister a handsome donation, and, turning to his three sons, who had witnessed the transaction, he advised them to imitate his example. "My dear boys," said he, "you have heard the case, now what will you give?" One said, "I will give all that my pocket will furnish;" another observed, "I will give half that I have in my purse;" the third sternly remarked, "I will give *nothing*." Some years after, the minister had occasion to visit the same place, and recollecting the family he had called upon, he inquired into the actual position of the parties. He was informed that the generous father was dead, the youth who had cheerfully given all his store was living in affluence, the son who had divided his pocket-money was in comfortable circumstances, but the third, who had indignantly refused to assist, and haughtily declared he would give *nothing*, was so reduced as to be supported by the two brothers!

5. A person, on one occasion, having been applied to by the mother of a small family, in very needy circumstances, gave her two shillings to supply her present necessities. He was struck by observing that, in the course of a few hours, he received, unexpectedly, in the payment of three small sums owing to him, the amount he had given to the poor woman. "He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again."

6. An individual in straitened circumstances, being called to contribute to a religious object, gave a sum, though not large, yet fully beyond his ability, encouraged by the promises made in the Word of God to the liberal, and also from the accomplishment of these in his own experience in the course of Divine providence. Having settled an affair with some friends, they afterwards thought that the sum specified in agreement, and for which they had received a written acknowledgment, was too small, and proposed giving an additional sum, which was exactly double the amount of that which he had devoted to the cause of God.

7. "How is it, Betty," said an elder of the church to a very poor woman in Wales, "that I always see you drop something upon the plate? Where do you get it?" "O, sir, I do not know," she replied; "the Lord knows my heart and my good will to his cause, and, somehow or other, when a collection is to be

made, I am sure to have my penny before me; and when it comes, I put it upon the plate." "Well," said he, "you have been faithful in a little, take this sovereign, and do what you will with it." "A sovereign, sir! I never had so much money in my life as a sovereign; what shall I do with it?" "I dare say you will find means of spending it," said he, "if your heart is devoted to the Lord's cause." Soon after this, a man came round to solicit subscriptions for some benevolent object. He went to one of the elders, who gave him half-a-sovereign, and another gave him five shillings, both of which were regarded as very liberal donations. Not liking to pass by any member of the church, he asked this poor woman what she would do. "Put my name down for a sovereign." "A sovereign!" said he; "why, where did you get a sovereign?" "O, sir," said she, "I got it honestly; put my name down for a sovereign." She gave him the sovereign, and in about two weeks from that time she received a letter from Doctors Commons, informing her that a friend had just left her *one hundred pounds!*

8. A gentleman in America, gay and worldly, was very friendly to an evangelical church in his neighbourhood; and as they were accustomed to hold camp-meetings year after year, he had a beautiful plot of his forest-land cleared of brush and fallen trees, and fitted up with convenient cabins or booths, for the accommodation of the worshippers, at his own expense. His liberality to the church was such as to attract not a little attention, on account of his being so far from any thing like religion himself. One of his companions one day rallied him on his incongruous benevolence, and inquired why he would make such a fool of himself as to throw away his money in behalf of such an object? His reply, in substance, was, "You do not understand it; I am no loser by my liberality to the church, but for every *five* dollars I give to them, God's providence in some way brings me back a *hundred!*"

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## PROVIDENTIAL REWARD OF KEEPING THE SABBATH.

1. "O what a blessed day," says Mr Wilberforce, "is the Sabbath, which allows us a precious interval wherein to pause, to come out from the thickets of worldly concerns, and give ourselves up to heavenly and spiritual objects! Observation and my own experience have convinced me that there is a special blessing on a right employment of these intervals. O, what a blessing is Sunday, interposed between the waves of worldly business, like the divine path of the Israelites through Jordan! There is nothing in which I would recommend you to be more strictly conscientious than in keeping the Sabbath holy. By this I mean

not only abstaining from all unbecoming sports and common business, but from consuming time in frivolous conversation, paying or receiving visits, which, among relations, often leads to a sad waste of this precious day. I can truly declare, that to me the Sabbath has been invaluable."

2. The late William Fox, Esq., one of the founders of the Sunday-School Society, served his apprenticeship to a draper and mercer in Oxford. Before the term of his indenture expired, his master gave up his business to him, in preference to his own relations, and that without any security for the payment of his stock (between three and four thousand pounds), except the character of his apprentice. Mr R —— had made no scruple of serving in his shop on the Lord's day, or of asking much more for an article than he intended to take for it; but when William Fox took the business, he told him he should neither serve on the Sabbath, nor sell his goods at different prices. Mr R—— replied, that if he did not serve on the Sabbath, he would very soon lose all his business. Mr Fox was decided; his business, instead of falling off, greatly increased; in a few years he paid the amount of the stock—he became rich, and, for some years before he died, was lord of the manor of Clapton, in Gloucestershire, an object of his desire, it seems, from the time he was ten years of age, and employed on one of its farms to drive off the birds.

3. A baker, who had long been accustomed to attend to his business on the Lord's day, having had his attention drawn to religion, and having felt its power, became desirous of associating with a body of Christians, who, however, declined to receive him, unless he relinquished baking on the Sabbath. The struggle in his mind was long and painful, as a considerable part of the support of his family was derived from his occupation on that day; but he at length yielded to the claims of duty, and, by refusing to serve his customers on the Lord's day, gave them offence, and became reduced to great poverty. His Christian friends urged him to persevere, assuring him that God would not forsake him. He was enabled to do so, and Providence interposed in his behalf. His customers gradually returned to him, and at length he was favoured with a larger share of business than had ever before fallen to his lot.

4. The late Rev. Charles G. Somers, of New York, had been about a year connected with the house of the wealthy John Jacob Astor, when it happened to be for Mr A.'s interest to send a swift schooner with a valuable cargo to the Mediterranean, to run by the British guns at the Straits of Gibraltar, America being then at war with England. It was ten o'clock on Saturday evening, as all hands connected with the house were busily employed in getting the papers of the schooner ready, that Mr Astor, whose desk stood opposite to Somers's, suddenly look

ing up and addressing him, said, "Well, Charley, I suppose you will come down to-morrow morning, and help off with the schooner." After a moment's pause, he replied, "Mr Astor, I cannot come down to-morrow, for it is God's day, and I will do no man's work on that day." It was a trying moment; but great was his relief when Mr Astor laughingly turned to another clerk, and said, "Well, well, David, I'm glad we've got one Christian amongst us. Well, Charley, you go to church to-morrow and pray for us, and the rest of us will come down and get off the schooner." A week had not elapsed before Mr Astor came to Somers with an order, that he should be ready in twenty-four hours for a two months' journey of importance.

5. A man, who had been accustomed to go with the cars on week days, informed his wife that he had been requested to go with the cars on the Sabbath. She replied, "I take it for granted that you do not intend to go." He told her that, if he should not go, he might lose his place; that he had no other employment, the times were hard, and he had a family to support. "I know it," said she, "but I hope you will not forget, that if a man cannot support a family by *keeping* the Sabbath, he certainly cannot support them by *breaking it*." "I am very glad," said the husband, "that you think so; I think so myself. That was what I wanted, to see whether we think alike." He told the superintendent that he liked his situation, and should be very sorry to lose it, but that he could not go with the mail on the Sabbath—that he wished to attend public worship, and go with his children to the Sabbath-school. He did not lose his place, nor did he suffer in a pecuniary point of view. He prospered more than before, and lived to bear his testimony to the duty and advantage of keeping the Sabbath.

6. A minister of marine in France addressed a letter to all the maritime prefects, directing that no workman, except in case of absolute necessity, should be employed in the government dockyards on the Sabbath. One reason which he gave was, that men who did not rest on the Sabbath did not perform so much labour during the week as those who did rest, and, of course, that it was not profitable to the State to have labour performed on that day. Another reason was, that it was useful to the State to promote among the labouring classes the religious observance of the Sabbath.

7. At a tavern in Pennsylvania, a man, who had arrived the evening before, was asked on Sabbath morning whether he intended to pursue his journey on that day. He answered, "No." He was asked, "Why not?" "Because," said he, "I am on a long journey, and wish to perform it as soon as I can. I have long been accustomed to travel on horseback, and have found that, if I stop on the Sabbath, my horse will travel farther during the week than if I do not."

# PROVIDENCES OF JUDGMENT.

## PROVIDENTIAL JUDGMENTS ON PERSECUTORS.

1. The disease of which Herod the Great died, and the misery which he suffered under it, plainly showed that the hand of God was then in a most signal manner upon him; for not long after the murders at Bethlehem, his distemper, as Josephus informs us, daily increased in an unheard-of manner. He had a lingering and wasting fever, and grievous ulcers in his entrails and bowels; a violent colic, and insatiable appetite; a venomous swelling in his feet; convulsions in his nerves; a perpetual asthma, and offensive breath; rottenness in his joints and other members, accompanied with prodigious itchings, crawling worms, and intolerable smell; so that he was a perfect hospital of incurable distempers.

2. Persecutors, or others who have unjustly shed the blood of their fellow-creatures, have often, in the righteous providence of God, met with a violent death, or been visited by signal judgments. Nero was driven from his throne, and perceiving his life in danger, became his own executioner; Domitian was killed by his own servants; Hadrian died of a distressing disease, which was accompanied with great mental agony; Severus never prospered in his affairs after he persecuted the church, and was killed by the treachery of his son; Maximinus reigned but three years, and died a violent death; Decius was drowned in a marsh, and his body never found; Valerian was taken prisoner by the Persians, and, after enduring the horrors of captivity for several years, was flayed alive; Dioclesian was compelled to resign his empire, and became insane; Maximinus Herculeus was deprived of his government and strangled; Maximinus Galerius was suddenly and awfully removed by death; and Severus committed suicide.

3. In the reign of Henry VII., Dr Whittington, a bishop's chancellor, having condemned a pious woman to the flames at Chipping, Sodbury, went to that town to witness the courageous manner in which she set her seal to the truth of the gospel. On his return from that affecting scene, a furious bull passed through the crowd, none of whom suffered from him, gored the chancellor, and suddenly inflicted death in a most awful manner.

4. John Felix, Earl of Wurtemburg, one of the captains of the Emperor Charles V., being at supper at Augsburg, in company with many who were threatening the sorest punishments on the persons of the pious Christians of that day, swore, before them all, that before he died, he would ride up to his spurs in the blood of the Lutherans. That same night he was choked, probably by

the bursting of a blood-vessel, which filled his throat, and at once removed him from the world.

5. Charles IX. of France was a cruel and persecuting monarch, (witness the massacre at Paris in 1572), and died in a very wretched state. He expired bathed in his own blood, which burst from his veins, and in his last moments he exclaimed, "What blood! What murders! I know not where I am! How will all this end? What shall I do? I am lost for ever! I know it!"

6. Mr Joseph Sherwood, one of the nonconformist ministers of England, having preached, "I will avenge the quarrel of my covenant," was carried to a petty session of justices, where Mr Robinson sat as chairman, who greatly reviled Mr Sherwood, and called him a rebel, &c., which he bore patiently, only making this reply, "That as he was a minister of the gospel, and at the church where there was so great an assembly, he could not but have compassion on the multitude, and give them a word of exhortation." Mr Robinson said, "But did ever man preach from such a rebellious text?" "Sir," replied Mr Sherwood, "I know man is a rebel against his Creator, but I never knew that the Creator could be a rebel against his creature." On which Robinson cried out, "Write his mittimus for Launceston jail." And then turning to Mr Sherwood, said, "I say, sir, it was a rebellious text." Mr Sherwood looked him full in the face, and addressed him in these words: "Sir, if you die the common death of all men, God never spake by me." He was then sent to prison, where he found favour with the keepers, and had liberty to walk about the castle and town. Robinson returned home; and a few days after, walking in the fields, a bull that had been very tame, came up to a gate where he stood, and his servant maid before him, who had been milking, when the creature turned her aside with his horns, ran directly upon Robinson, and tore out his bowels! He was carried home in this miserable state, and soon afterwards died.

7. In 1682, some soldiers came to break up a meeting where Mr Browning, who had been ejected from Desborough, in Northamptonshire, was, and to apprehend him. The constable of the place, who was present, admonished them to be well advised in what they did. "For," said he, "when Sir —— was alive, he eagerly prosecuted these meetings, and engaged eight soldiers of the country troop to assist him, whereof myself was one. Sir —— himself is dead; six of the soldiers are dead; some of them were hanged, and some of them broke their necks; and I myself fell off my horse, and broke my collar bone, in the act of persecuting them. This has given me such a warning, that for my part, I am resolved I will never meddle with them more."

8. About the year 1738, when some of the ministers of the Se-

cession were preaching at Braid's Craigs, in the vicinity of Edinburgh, a man had the hardihood to set fire to some whins in the immediate neighbourhood of the spot where a numerous audience was assembled, concluding from the direction and force of the wind, that the smoke proceeding from the burning whins would exceedingly annoy the Seceders. It so happened, however, in the good providence of God, that the wind immediately veered about to another quarter, and the assembly suffered no inconvenience. The impious project, in the mean time, attracted the notice of the ministers as well as the people. Mr Ralph Erskine publicly remarked, that the person who had been guilty of that deed, would perhaps live to repent of it. That same individual, it is credibly related, was afterwards three times driven from his own dwelling, by means of fire. First one house he occupied on Clerkington estate was burned down, and then another; on which his master dismissed him, saying, "That man would burn all the houses on his property." He removed, in consequence, to Prestonpans, where a similar calamity befell him, the truth of which was attested by a very old woman in Edinburgh, who affirmed, that when a child, she made a very narrow escape from the flames of that house, being let down from a window in a blanket.

9. A considerable number of years ago, some of the members of the Methodist Society, in Kingston, Jamaica, were wont to hold a prayer-meeting every Tuesday evening, in a large ruinous house occupied by a poor woman of colour in the lower part of the town. One evening, some young fellows made great disturbance, and broke part of the furniture. One of them loudly threatened to pull down the house on the next Tuesday evening. But mark the just judgment of God! That very evening he was carried to his grave—carried from the very house, too, which he had threatened to pull down. The house in which he died, which was opposite to that where the prayer-meetings were held, being too small for the funeral, the poor woman was requested to grant the use of her own house for the purpose. She readily complied; so that his corpse lay in the very house he had threatened to pull down, and was carried out thence on the evening in which he had designed to perpetrate that wicked deed.

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## PROVIDENTIAL JUDGMENTS ON SABBATH-BREAKERS.

1. Mr Clarke gives an account of a godly minister, who one day was preaching, and earnestly pressing the sanctification of the Sabbath; and who, in his sermon, had occasion to make mention of that man, who, by the special commandment of God, was stoned to death for gathering sticks on the Sabbath-day. A per-

son in the congregation wickedly rose up and laughed, and made all the haste he could out of the church, and went and gathered sticks, though he had no need of them. But when the people were coming home from church, they found him lying dead, with the bundle of sticks in his arms. "These instances of Divine vengeance," adds Mr Willison, "inflicted on profaners of the Lord's day, may contribute very much to confirm us in the belief of the divine institution of this holy day; and likewise may serve to warn all ranks and degrees of persons, to guard against the contempt and violation of the Lord's day. The Lord indeed exerciseth great long-suffering and patience towards many notorious Sabbath-breakers, to show us that there is a judgment-day to come. But nevertheless he makes monuments of some, to let us know that verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth."

2. The same author relates the following instance of Divine judgment:—In the year 1634, on a Lord's day, during the time of a great frost, fourteen young men, while they were playing at football on the ice, on the river Trent, near Gainsborough, meeting together in a scuffle, the ice suddenly broke, and they were all drowned.

3. Mr Abberly, a godly minister in Burton-upon-Trent, took often occasion to reprove and threaten Sabbath-breakers, especially such as sold and bought meat on the Sabbath-day mornings, a practice too common in that place; nevertheless, there was a tailor in that town, a very nimble and active man, dwelling at the upper end of the town, who would go through the long street, as it were in a bravado, to the other end of the town, and fetch home meat on the Lord's-day before morning prayer; but as he came back with both his hands full, in the midst of the street he fell down stark dead. "I was," says Dr Teate, "an eye-witness both of his fall and burial; and it pleased God thereby to work some reformation both amongst the butchers and others."

4. In that part of the country of Grisons, which adjoins to the state of Venice, formerly stood the ancient town of Pleuers, built on a rising ground near the foot of a mountain. The situation was considered healthy; the gardens were delightful, and hither the neighbouring gentry used to come on Sabbath and spend the day in all manner of riot and debauchery. Their voluptuousness was great, and the enormity of their crimes was aggravated by their abuse of the blessings of Divine Providence. A lady told Bishop Burnet, that she had heard her mother often repeat some passages of a Protestant minister's sermons, who preached in a little church in the neighbourhood of the place. He intimated in his discourse, that nothing but a timely repentance, and the forsaking of their evil ways, would screen them from Divine justice, which

would soon be executed upon them in a most signal manner. This was good advice, but, alas! it was slighted, and the people continued to go on in the same manner as before. On the 25th of August 1618, an inhabitant came and told them to be gone, for he saw the mountain cleaving, and that it would soon fall upon them; but he was only laughed at. He had a daughter whom he persuaded to leave all and go along with him; but, when she had got out of the town, she recollected that she had not locked the door of a room in which she had left several things of value; so accordingly went back; but in the mean time the mountain fell, and she was buried in the ruins, together with every person there present, not one escaping. The fall of the mountain choking up the river that run near the bottom, first spread the alarm over the neighbouring country. "I could hear no particular character," says Bishop Burnet, "of the man who escaped, so I must leave the secret means of so singular preservation to the great discovery at the last day, when these steps of Divine Providence, which we cannot now account for, will be disclosed."

5. Some time ago, at the village of Ampleworth, in Yorkshire, two young men were playing at fives on the Lord's-day morning. J. W., a pious man, reproved them, and warned them of the impropriety and danger of their conduct, as they might draw down God's judgment upon them. The reproof, however, had not the desired effect, as the eldest of them swore, by the God who made him; and at the same time added, that if he lived until the following Sabbath, he would call three or four of his companions together to play near the chapel-wall at the time of service. On Sabbath morning he was taken dangerously ill, and in spite of all medical aid, expired in the course of the day!

6. One Lord's-day morning, in June 1825, six young men took a boat and a waterman on a party of pleasure to Richmond. Upon their arrival there, they drank freely, and became intoxicated. When on their return, they reached that part of the river opposite to Old Swan Stairs, Thames Street, between seven and eight o'clock in the evening, Beane the waterman made for the shore; but on attempting to land, they began to swear in a shocking manner, declaring that they would not pay him for his day's work unless he would take them through London Bridge. The waterman finding they were resolute, and fearing they would carry their threat into execution, consented to their wishes, and accordingly put off his boat. He had, however, only just entered beneath the arch, when the boat became unmanageable, and upset. Assistance speedily arrived; but, alas! two of the unhappy young men sank to rise no more. How awful to meet death, amidst intemperance, blasphemy, and Sabbath profanation!

7. A lamentable loss of life occurred at Ashton-under-Line, on

Sabbath afternoon, January 14, 1833. Six boys, members of a Sabbath-school, instead of attending there, were amusing themselves by sliding on the ice of a small reservoir of water, at the top of Cricket Street; when one of them having bought a root of liquorice, his companions all flocked around him, nearly in the centre of the pond, where it was four or five yards deep; and, partly by the pressure of this congregated body, as well as by the frantic jumping of one of them upon the ice, it gave way, and plunged all six into a watery grave. Some children instantly raised an alarm, when a man named Knott hurried to the spot; and, supposing that his own son was one of the number, from seeing a hat similar in colour to his son's on the surface, he plunged into the pond, and was immediately surrounded by the drowning boys, who clung to him so eagerly, that he perished along with them in his humane endeavours to save them. The spectators being chiefly females, no assistance could be rendered in due time to the sufferers. At last they were brought out of the water by three seamen, when they were all quite dead.

8. "A dreadful accident," says a newspaper, "occurred on the Versailles Left Bank Railroad, on Sabbath, the 8th May 1842, by which, from the lowest calculation, fifty persons have lost their lives, and about one hundred and fifty persons have been seriously wounded. The great waters played at Versailles on Sabbath, and attracted great crowds of persons, who returned by the five o'clock train. There were seventeen or eighteen waggons, with two engines before and one behind. The velocity was excessive, and when between Bellevue and Meudon the axle-tree of the first machine broke, and stopping, the second ran over it, killing the stoker, and breaking the first machine in pieces, spilt its fire on the ground. Instantly six or seven waggons were broken in pieces, and the rest, running over the live fire of the broken engines, burst into flames. It is the custom on the Left Bank Railroad for the doors of the waggons to be closed, without any possibility of opening them, except by keys in the hands of the conductors. No conductors were forthcoming, and thus the inmates of three of the waggons were burned. The impossibility of identifying the calcined remains adds to the horror and uncertainty of the catastrophe. The next train which was coming up was stopped, and the passengers getting out, hastened to the scene and beheld a pyramid of cars, whilst men with poles and hooks were labouring to rescue the burning bodies. There was no possibility of getting water in any abundance on the height. Among the dead is the celebrated circumnavigator, Admiral Dumont D'Urville. The Admiral returned last year from his second voyage round the world, during which he discovered and explored, previously unknown regions contiguous to the South Pole. Since his arrival in Paris, he had somewhat

recovered, and was entirely occupied in preparing for the press and putting in order the materials for the history of his second expedition, when he met his unhappy fate. Many persons of distinction escaped this calamity by being a moment too late, or by finding the train full."

9. An American paper states that some time ago, three young men went out sailing on the Sabbath. All of them were warned against it, and one of them had been *repeatedly* warned against similar conduct. This last replied, he would go, though he went to the bottom of the river. By a sudden turn of wind the boat was upset, and all three found a watery grave!

10. On another Sabbath, accidents happened on *six* out of the *seven* railroads between Albany and Buffalo. On all property was destroyed and life endangered; and on one a fatal accident occurred, causing several deaths, in most distressing circumstances. Several persons were killed outright; one was crushed under a boiler, the friends of another were picking out his mangled limbs from the ruins of a shattered car, and three individuals nearly dead, were carried to a neighbouring farm-house; and cars, baggage, mail-bags, and locomotives, were mingled in the fearful wreck, while the smoke of the half-extinguished fires of the locomotives threw a dismal sadness over the scene.

11. A man who ridiculed the idea that God makes a difference in his providence between those who yield visible obedience to his laws and those who do not, had been engaged, on a certain Sabbath, in gathering his crops into his barn. The next week he had occasion to take fire out into his field in order to burn some brush. He left it, as he supposed, safely, and went to dinner. The wind took the fire and carried it into his barnyard, which was filled with combustibles, and before he was aware of it, the flames were bursting out of his barn. He arose in amazement, saw that all was lost, and fixing his eyes on the curling flames, stood speechless. Then, pointing to the rising column of fire, he said, with a solemn emphasis, "That is the finger of God."

12. An old gentleman in Boston remarked, "Men do not gain any thing by working on the Sabbath. I can recollect men who, when I was a boy, used to load their vessels down on the long wharf, and keep their men at work from morning to night on the Sabbath-day; but they have come to nothing. Depend upon it, men do not gain any thing, in the end, by working on the Sabbath."

13. Seven young men, in a town in Massachusetts, started in the same business nearly at the same time. Six of them had some property or assistance from their friends, and followed their business seven days in a week. The other had less property than any of the six. He had less assistance from others, and worked

in his business only six days in a week. He was at length the only man who had property, and did not fail in his business.

14. A distinguished merchant, in New York, remarked, "It is about thirty years since I came to this city; and every man through this whole range, who came down to his store, or suffered his counting-room to be opened on the Sabbath, has lost his property. There is no need of breaking the Sabbath, and no benefit from it. We have not had a vessel leave the harbour on the Sabbath for more than twenty years. It is altogether better to get them off on a week day than on the Sabbath."

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## PROVIDENTIAL JUDGMENTS ON PROFANE AND IRRELIGIOUS PERSONS.

1. When Mr Joseph Woodward, one of the nonconformist ministers of England, was settled in Dursley, he vigorously set about the reformation of many disorders in discipline and manners that existed among the people. In particular, he declared his resolution to admit none to the Lord's Supper, but those who, besides a visible probity of conversation, had a competent knowledge of divine things. A certain person said, "He would not submit to examination, and if Mr Woodward would not give him the sacrament, he would take it." In pursuance of his impious resolution, this man was coming to church on the sacrament day, but he had scarcely set one foot over the threshold, before he fell down dead.

2. A labourer, employed in a stone quarry in Yorkshire, was much addicted to the sin of profane swearing, though many attempts had been made to convince him of its criminality. Having one day fastened to a rope a stone of more than ordinary weight, the person at the mouth of the quarry observed that he feared the rope was not sufficiently strong to bear it. The man answered, with a most dreadful oath, "Then let it crush me to atoms!" The wretched individual had scarcely uttered these words, when the stone fell, and hurried his unprepared soul into the presence of his offended Maker.

3. A lady in the south of England, had a little boy who was very ill. On being told there was no hope of his recovery, she became almost frantic, and opened her mouth, not in prayer to God for her own submission, and child's salvation; but in positive declaration that her child should not be taken from her. "O God! thou shalt not take my child—he shall not die!" was her prayer. The prayer was answered. The child did not die. He recovered; and his mother lived to see him taken to the gallows!

4. There was in a populous Swiss village, a pious and excellent clergyman, who preached and lived with such holy zeal and exemplary piety, that many were converted under his ministry. But there lived in the same place a wicked and abandoned character, who not only slighted all the means of grace, but turned the most serious matters into ridicule, and made a laughing-stock of the preacher's expressions. One morning, he came very early to the public-house, and began to intoxicate himself with liquor, profaning the name and word of God, and ridiculing the term of conversion. "Now," says he, "I myself will become a convert," turning himself from one side to the other, and dancing about in the room with a variety of foolish gestures. He quickly left the room, fell down the stairs, broke his neck, and expired, exhibiting an awful monument of God's most righteous vengeance, which sometimes, even in this life, overtakes those that profane his holy name.

5. A person with not very ample means of support, was burdened with a large family. A neighbour had just called to tell him of a friend who had got a prize in the lottery, when he was also informed of the birth of his twelfth child. He exclaimed, peevishly, "God sends meat to others, children to me." It so happened, that God, at whose government he had so impiously murmured, sent him those riches he longed for. But as he sent him the wished-for wealth, he deprived him of the children he had complained of. He saw them one by one go to the grave before him; and in advanced life, and great affluence, when he endured the stroke of having his last beloved daughter taken from his eyes, he bitterly remembered his former rebellious murmurings against God.

6. A minister praying for a child apparently dying, said, "If it be Thy will spare ——." The wretched and distracted mother interrupting him, cried, "It *must* be His will; I will have no ifs." The child, to the surprise of many, recovered, but lived to break his mother's heart, and was publicly executed at the age of twenty-two.

7. A fond father was in great distress for a favourite child, whom he apprehended to be dying in infancy. Several of his friends endeavoured to assuage his grief, but he refused to be comforted. At length the minister on whom he attended offered to pray with him, and desired him to compose his mind, and give up his favourite son to the Divine disposal, since there was no probable hope of his recovery. He replied, "I cannot give him up; and it is my importunate request that God would spare this child to me, whatever may be the consequence." He had his desire; the child recovered, and grew up, if possible more and more his darling: but he lived to be a thorn in his side, and to pierce his heart with many sorrows. For just as he came to

maturity, he robbed his excellent master, whom before he had so often injured; he was seized by the hand of justice, tried, condemned, and died one of the most hardened wretches that ever went out of life in that ignominious manner. Upon the fatal day of execution, the mourning father was made to remember his former rash petition with grief and tears; and humbled in the dust, confessed his folly and his sin.

8. After the fall of the Portuguese in India, a Portuguese ecclesiastic was asked by an Englishman, when he thought his nation should become able to resume its power. "As soon," replied he, "as the wickedness of your nation shall exceed that of mine." This man was master of the true key to the interpretation of history, and of the causes of social prosperity and rise and fall of empires. "Righteousness exalteth a nation;" but iniquity bringeth any people to shame.

9. When Bonaparte was about to invade Russia, one who had endeavoured to dissuade him from his purpose, finding he could not prevail, quoted to him the proverb, "Man *proposes*, but God *disposes*;" to which he indignantly replied, "I *dispose* as well as *propose*." A Christian lady, on hearing the impious boast, remarked, "I set that down as the turning point of Bonaparte's fortunes. God will not suffer a creature with impunity thus to usurp his prerogative." It happened to Bonaparte just as the lady predicted. His invasion of Russia was the commencement of his fall.

10. In the Paris papers of August 1, 1817, among the obituaries is the following announcement:—"Died, within these few days, in the hospital of pauper lunatics of Saltpetrière, where she had lived unpitied and unknown for many years, the famous Theroigne de Mericourt, the goddess of Reason, the most remarkable of the heroines of the Revolution." This female was seated on a throne, and hailed alternately as the goddess of Reason and Liberty. There was something remarkable in the history of the latter days of this poor creature, and her life is not without its moral. She who was taught publicly to blaspheme her Creator and dishonour her sex, was, for the last twenty years of her miserable life, subject to the greatest of human calamities —the deprivation of her *reason*. She repented severely of her horrible crimes, and her few lucid intervals were filled up by the most heart-rending lamentations. She died at the age of fifty-seven.

11. At Tiverton, near Bath, a few days before Christmas, 1824, Charles ——— was in company with several young men at a public house, when, after getting intoxicated, they quarrelled, and Charles, on leaving his companions, uttered the dreadful imprecation, "If I ever enter this house again, I wish God may strike me dead upon the spot!" or words to that effect. On Christmas-

day, however, he entered the same house, and sat down to drink and smoke as usual. When some one reminded him of what he had said a few days before, he made light of it, observing that *he did not regard that.* The words, however, were scarcely uttered, when he fell back in his chair, and instantly expired!

12. J. H. was through life a notorious swearer, quite an adept in this species of iniquity. One peculiarity in his case was that of cursing his eyes, or rather calling upon God to do so. It is remarkable, that for nearly two years he experienced a heavy affliction in his eyes, which baffled all human skill, and terminated in total blindness. This affected his general system so much, that he gradually sunk under it, till at length he expired. During his illness, he was visited, spoken to, and prayed with, but without much hope.

13. An old man who lived at Castlereagh, an habitual neglecter of public worship, and a notorious drunkard, being at a person's house where he had been an inmate for many months, he joined with them at family worship in the morning: soon after which, he told one of the servants that he would go to the house of a certain person in the neighbourhood, to procure some rum that was promised him the day before. He immediately repaired to the place, and in the course of the day drank himself into a state of intoxication. In the afternoon, he observed to a little girl, "I am now sixty-six years old; can you tell me how many hours I have lived?" Having made the calculation, she told him. He then said, "I'll give any one a bottle of rum to tell me how many hours more I have to live." The girl, with apparently equal presumption and unconcern, but as though inspired to "answer a fool according to his folly," replied, "You have now three hours more to live." Soon after this he showed a disposition for sleep, and was laid on a bed. A few hours afterwards, some one going to rouse him, he was found a breathless corpse.

14. A mason at Bromyard, in England, was one evening playing at cards in a public-house in that town, where he was heard to exclaim, "God damn my soul to hell-flames!" Soon after this he went home; and while going up stairs to bed, fell down, and was taken up dead!

15. An inhabitant of the county of York engaged to drink sixteen glasses of spirits, or of brandy-and-water, at one sitting, in consideration that his friend would pay for them. After drinking nine or ten, he was asked if he thought he could get through the whole, when he profanely replied that he would, or *go to hell.* These words were scarcely uttered before the messenger of death called him to his account.

16. Some time ago, while several workmen were dining together in a public-house, one of them gave way to a habit of swear-

ing by God. The master of the house made remonstrances with him, which was taken in good part. Another man, however, a weaver, after denying the existence of God, uttered the most impious language, and at last said, in a contemptuous tone, "I will go and sup with your God this night." The words were scarcely pronounced when he fell dead upon the ground, as if he had been struck by a thunderbolt.

17. Richard Denton, a blacksmith, residing in Cambridgeshire, was a professor of religion, and instrumental in converting the martyr, William Woolsey. When that holy man expressed his wonder that he had not followed him to prison, Denton replied, that he could not burn in the cause of Christ. Not long after, however, his house being on fire, he ran in to save some of his goods, and was burnt to death.

18. A coal merchant at Brigg, in Lincolnshire, had occasion to send a boat to Barton with a cargo of coals, and ordered one of his men to take charge of it. As the boat was leaving the wharf, a person civilly accosted the man, asking whither he was going; "I am going to hell," said he, with an oath. The unhappy man died suddenly before he reached Barton.

19. A physician, who had imbibed Socinian principles, laboured to degrade the character and dignity of the Saviour. Such was his contempt, that he seldom spoke of him in conversation under any other name than the *carpenter's son*. At length he was seized with affliction, which terminated in his death. Shortly before his departure, the servant who attended him, on entering his room, found him in great agitation. On inquiring the cause, he answered, "I am a dying man, and that which most of all affects me is, that I must be *judged* by the *carpenter's son*."

20. In the neighbourhood of Hitchin, in Hertfordshire, there lived, some years ago, a labouring man, who, having a cross child, frequently wished with an oath that his next child might be both deaf and dumb. He afterwards had three children, all of whom were deaf and dumb.

21. Some years ago, a seaman who accustomed himself to the most horrid imprecations, being on board at sea, took with him a bucket and ascended the shrouds. Proceeding along the yards, "Now," said he to his shipmates who stood below, "if Jesus were before me, I would heave this bucket at his head!" The horrid words no sooner dropped from his lips than he fell with tremendous force upon the deck, and was immediately taken up a corpse. The surviving crew were so impressed by the event, that they were never heard to utter an oath during the remainder of the voyage. This account the narrator received from an eye-witness. Let swearers and profane persons take warning from an event so awful.

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## PROVIDENTIAL JUDGMENTS ON LIARS, PERJURED PERSONS, ETC.

1. The Duke of Buckingham, having by an unfortunate accident lost the army which he had raised against the usurper Richard II., was forced to flee for his life without page or attendant; at last he took refuge in the house of Humphrey Bannister at Shrewsbury, who, being one of his servants, and having been formerly raised by him from a low condition, would, he trusted, be ready to afford him every possible protection. Bannister, however, upon the king's proclamation, promising £1000 reward to him that should apprehend the duke, betrayed his master to John Merton, high-sheriff of Shropshire, who sent him under a strong guard to Salisbury, where the king then was, by whom he was condemned to be beheaded. But divine vengeance pursued the traitor and his family; for on demanding the £1000 that was the price of his master's blood, King Richard refused to pay it, saying, "He that would be false to so good a master ought not to be encouraged." He was afterwards hanged for manslaughter; his eldest son fell into a state of derangement and died in a hog-sty; his second became deformed and lame; his third son was drowned in a small pool of water; and the rest of his family perished miserably.

2. Mr Philip Henry relates a remarkable story concerning a good old friend of his, who, when young, being an orphan, was greatly wronged by his uncle. His portion, which was £200, was put into the hands of that uncle, who, when he grew up, shuffled with him, and would give him but £40, instead of his £200, and he had no way of recovering his right but by law; but before he would engage in that, he was willing to advise with his minister, who was the famous Dr Twiss of Newberry; the counsel he gave him, all things considered, was for peace sake, and for the preventing of sin, and snares, and troubles, to take the £40 rather than contend; "and Thomas," said the doctor, "if thou dost so, assure thyself that God will make it up to thee and thine another way, and they that defraud will be the losers by it at last." He did so, and it pleased God to bless that little which he began the world with, that when he died in a good old age, he left his son possessed of some hundreds a-year, whilst he that had wronged him fell into poverty.

3. Some years ago, a man who with several others worked for a generous master, received a donation of half-a-crown, to be equally divided among his fellow-workmen. The man did not acquaint them with his having received it; and, on being questioned on the subject, denied it. His denial was disputed; and he, designing to exculpate himself from the charge, lifted up his right hand in the midst of them, and said that he wished it might

rot off, if he had received the money. The circumstance was passed over by the workmen; but that God who trieth the heart, and who heard the impious wish, did not forget it; for one night shortly afterwards, while this wicked man was in bed, his hand literally rotted off, just above the wrist.

4. Some years ago, a poor woman in the work-house at Milburn Port, being charged with having stolen some trivial article which was a-missing, wished God might strike her dumb, blind, and dead, if she knew any thing of it. About six o'clock she ate her supper as well as usual; soon after her speech faltered, her eyes closed, and before seven she was a breathless corpse, without any apparent cause.

5. Not long ago, a young girl having stolen a silver spoon from her mother, who was blind, was taxed by her with the fact, and repeatedly denied it. On being pressed with the charge, and conceiving what she had farther to say might silence any more inquiry, she exclaimed, "May God strike me dead if I have the spoon!" Judgment was visited on her instantly. She fell dead! On stripping the clothes from the body, there was, to astonishment, found the very article of which she had so positively declared her ignorance.

6. A woman, an inhabitant of Sydney, in New South Wales, was accused of stealing a sum of money, and was tried for the offence at the criminal court, where she declared in the most solemn manner, that *if she had taken the money, she wished her right arm might rot off her body.* In a very short time afterwards, without any visible cause, she was seized in the right arm with a violent swelling, which produced a rapid mortification. Surgical aid being called in, it was found necessary to amputate the diseased member; but the operation was useless, as the mortification had reached the shoulder, whence it extended with an amazing rapidity all over the body. This miserable woman soon expired in the most excruciating pain, and with the most dreadful remorse and horror of mind—her own impious wish being answered.

7. A young lad, who had been guilty of stealing, upon being charged therewith, most solemnly denied the fact; and upon being more closely interrogated upon the subject by those who were well satisfied of his guilt, he appealed to God as witness of his innocence, and wished that if he was not, his right arm might rot off. Very soon after this, to the astonishment of every one, he was taken with a mortification in his right arm, which spread all down his right side, until his bowels were visible through his ribs. In this dreadful condition he lay for some considerable time; and there were many who out of curiosity went to see him, and became witnesses of the awful judgment of God. "I also," says Mr Pawson, "might have seen him, but declined it,

because the smell was almost intolerable, which, as I lodged exactly opposite to him, in a very narrow lane, I but too plainly perceived, even in the room which I occupied. He died at last in great agony, and, I fear, without any real change wrought in him."

8. Not long ago, in Edinburgh, a poor woman called upon a benevolent gentleman, pleading for assistance, because her husband had died that morning, and she had no money to inter him, and her children were starving. The gentleman had to pass by her dwelling that afternoon, and thought he would visit her abode; and what were the sight that met his eye when he entered? There sat the husband alive, who, she said, was dead; and on the floor lay that woman herself a corpse.

9. Some time ago, a person in Paisley, member of a funeral society in that town, presented to the treasurer a forged line, certifying the death of a child, and, on the faith of it, obtained £1 : 10s. The child was in perfect health at the time this deceit was practised; but, in a few days after, it fell from a stair, and died of the injuries. The father has since been expelled from the society.

10. A few years since, a woman in Loughborough, England, went to purchase a bedstead, which was sold to her for thirteen shillings, and change given her out of a one-pound note, which she gave in payment. A short time afterwards, she went again to the shop, and asserted that eighteen-pence less than the proper change was given her. This the shopkeeper denied, stating the exact coin he had given her. She, however, persisted in her declaration, and said, she wished she might die in his house if she had not spoken the truth. Awful to relate, she was immediately taken ill, was removed to another house, and soon expired, never once speaking after she had left the shop. The money was found in her pocket, exactly as the shopkeeper had described.

11. A woman one day, in Covent-Garden market, had sold some fruit to a person who had given her sixpence to change. She counted out some change, and then asked for the sixpence, when, at the same time, she had got it. The purchaser declared that he had given her sixpence; she declared he had not. High words passed between them, and a crowd of people was soon collected. The wicked woman called upon God to strike her dead if she had got the money. God did instantly strike her dead, and the sixpence was found between her fingers.

12. A rich widow, near Lyons, without children, had promised to make her will in favour of her niece. The aunt dying, however, before this was accomplished, the niece went among friends, told her story, and asked what could be done. Her perfidious counsellors engaged her to play the old trick of hiding the death,

and placing herself in bed, calling for a notary and witnesses, and dictating a convenient testament. She did her part well, and it succeeded wonderfully in a room that was partially darkened. The young girl, sunk in a pillow and curtains, pronounced with a feeble and broken voice, the last will and testament of the aunt; the notary wrote, and the victory was nearly sure, when one of the witnesses, who knew a little more than the others, declared he would sign no such act; for that the pretended testatrix had been dead for several hours, and he would not be an accomplice of the deception. The unhappy niece, confounded and overwhelmed, could not support the idea of the consequent shame and punishment of her guilt, and she suddenly expired, and was buried at the same time with her aunt.

13. Mr J. Taggart was elected a senator from the county of Columbia to the second general congress of the State of Ohio. He appeared, and made the necessary oaths, and took his seat. In a few days he was seized with melancholy, which soon progressed to insanity. In his insane ravings, he disclosed that he was not thirty years of age when he took the oath of office and his seat, and that his conscience upbraided him with the crime of perjury, in taking an oath to support the Constitution, and, at the same time, taking a seat in violation of its provisions. From this insanity he never recovered, and survived its commencement but a few months.

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## PROVIDENTIAL JUDGMENTS ON MURDERERS, OPPRESSORS, THIEVES, ETC.

1. When Dr Donne took possession of his first living, he took a walk into the churchyard, where the sexton was digging a grave, and throwing up a skull. The doctor took it up and found a rusty headless nail sticking in the temple, which he drew out secretly, and wrapt it up in the corner of his handkerchief. He then demanded of the gravedigger whether he knew whose skull that was. He said it was a man's who kept a brandy shop, an honest drunken fellow, who one night having taken two quarts, was found dead in his bed next morning. "Had he a wife?" "Yes." "What character does she bear?" "A very good one; only the neighbours reflect on her, because she married the day after her husband was buried." This was enough for the doctor, who, under the pretence of visiting his parishioners, called on her, he asked her several questions, and among others, what sickness her husband died of. She gave him the same account he had received: upon this he suddenly opened the handkerchief, and cried in an authoritative voice, "Woman, do you know this

mail?" She was struck with horror at the unexpected demand, instantly owned the fact, was tried and executed.

2. Early one morning, a person of some distinction was found, by some peasants, lying dead, in the midst of an unfrequented wood in the neighbourhood of Lyons, in France. By the side of the corpse stood a mastiff dog that used to attend upon the deceased, and who was now bemoaning his master's fate. The monarch was at this time in the adjacent city, and being informed of the circumstance, he instituted a rigorous inquiry after the murderer. An ancient animosity having existed between the deceased and a certain man of fortune in the vicinity, he became suspected; but he strongly asserted his own innocence, declaring that the old dispute had been amicably arranged; and his servants came forward to swear that their master was in bed very early on the evening of the unhappy affair. Notwithstanding these assertions, the king felt grounds of suspicion; and being a man of shrewd discernment, he read the lineaments of guilt, as he thought, in the features of the accused, in the midst of his vehement protestations. The king accordingly ordered the suspected person, and twenty others, to be placed before him next day, and introducing the faithful animal which had been found by the side of the corpse, the noble creature instantly singled out the murderer (who was the very person suspected), and springing upon him, would have torn him to pieces on the spot, had not the culprit confessed the fact, and thus obtained a change in the mode of punishment which was justly awarded to his guilt.

3. Many years since, a seafaring man called at a village inn, on the coast of Normandy, and asked for supper and a bed. The landlord and landlady were elderly people, and apparently poor. He entered into converstion with them, invited them to partake of his cheer, asked many questions about themselves and their family, and particularly respecting a son who had gone to sea when a boy, and whom they had long given over as dead. The landlady showed him to his bed-room; and when she quitted him he put a purse of gold into her hand, and desired her to take care of it till the morning; pressed her affectionately by the hand, and bade her good-night. She returned to her husband, showed him the gold, which they resolved to secure for themselves by murdering the traveller in his sleep; this they accomplished accordingly, and buried the body. Early in the morning two or three relations came, and inquired, in an exulting and joyful tone, for the traveller who had arrived on the previous evening. The old people seemed greatly confused, and said he had risen very early and was gone away. "Impossible!" said the incredulous relatives; "it is *your own son*, who has lately returned to France, and is come to make happy the evening of your days. He resolved to lodge with you one night as a stranger, that he might see you unknown, and

judge of your conduct to wayfaring mariners." Language cannot describe the horror of the murderers when they found that they had dyed their hands in the blood of their long-lost child. They confessed their crime; the body was found; and the wretched murderers expiated their offence by being broken on the wheel.

4. Sometimes murders, secretly committed, have been brought to light in a very remarkable manner. The following is an instance, taken from an American newspaper: "In the village of Manchester, Vermont, several years since, R. Colvin, a man of respectable connections and character, suddenly and mysteriously disappeared; all search and inquiry proved futile and in vain, until within a few weeks, a person dreamed that he had appeared to him, and informed him that he had been murdered by two persons whom he named, and that he had been buried in such a place, a few roods distant from a sapling, leaving a particular mark which he minutely described. The same dream occurred three times successively before he awoke, and each time the deceased seemed very solicitous for him to follow. Upon awaking, his feelings were wrought up to such a degree, and he was so impressed with a belief of the fact, that he determined to collect some friends, and follow the directions laid down in the dream. He did so, and discovered, to his great surprise, not only a tree marked precisely as described, but also the appearance of a grave; and upon digging found a human skeleton! After this discovery, Stephen and Jesse Brown, the persons implicated in the dream, were apprehended and put in confinement, and, after a few days, confessed the deed. They were tried, convicted, and sentenced to be executed on the 10th of January last" (1820.)

5. John Cameron, bishop of Glasgow, was so given to covetousness, extortion, violence, and oppression, especially upon his own tenants and vassals, that he would scarcely afford them bread to eat, or clothes to cover their nakedness. But the night before Christmas-day, and in the midst of his cruelties, as he lay in bed at his house in Lockwood, he heard a voice summoning him to appear before the tribunal of Christ, and give an account of his actions. Being terrified with this notice, and the pangs of a guilty conscience, he called up his servants, commanding them to bring lights, and stay in the room with him. He himself took a book in his hand, and began to read, but the voice being heard a second time, struck all the servants with horror. The same voice repeating the summons a third time, and with a louder and more dreadful accent, the bishop, after a lamentable and frightful groan, was found dead in his bed, with his tongue hanging out of his mouth, a dreadful spectacle to all beholders. This relation is made by the celebrated historian Buchanan, who records it as a remarkable example of God's judgment against the sin of oppression.

6. The history of a respected citizen of the town of A——, is remarkable, on account of his seven sons, who, though not otherwise deformed, were quite dumb. The father was constantly sorrowing over his sons, and could not comprehend why God visited him so dreadfully, more than other fathers. One day he accompanied them to a neighbouring farm, and where an old Swiss sold refreshments. The afflicted father looked with much feeling at his sons, who sat blooming and healthy round the table. The tears started in his eyes, and he exclaimed, "O God! why have I deserved this?" The old Swiss, who had overheard him, drew him on one side, and said, with honesty, "I see you are downcast at the affliction of your sons; but I do not wonder at it. Do you not remember (I knew you from your youth) when a boy, how you laid snares for the birds, and when caught, tore their tongues out of their months, and then, with malignant joy, let them fly again? How often have I not warned you? Oh, the birds under the heavens have accused you, and you shall never hear the sweet name of father from the lips of your children."

7. A poor woman, who had recently lost her husband, was advised to administer to his effects, as it was supposed he had left some property. But when a full inquiry into his circumstances was made, it proved that the supposition was without foundation, and that, instead of having property, he was greatly in debt. It was not long after his burial, that a person came to her house and said, "Mrs Chadsey, you are much indebted to your landlord; and he has sent me to demand the rent that is due to him." She answered, "Sir, I have not so much money in the world; indeed, I have none at all." "But," said he, "have you nothing that will fetch money?" She replied, "Sir, you see all that I have: I have nothing in the house but these six children." "Then," said he, "I must execute my writ, and carry you to Newgate. But it is a hard case, I will leave you here till to-morrow, and will go and try if I can persuade your landlord to give you time." He returned the next morning, and said, "I have done all I can; I have used all the arguments I could think of; but your landlord is not to be moved. He vows, if I do not carry you to prison without delay, I shall go thither myself." She answered, "You have done your part: the will of the Lord be done." He said, "I will venture to make one trial more, and will come again in the morning." He returned in the morning and said, "Mrs Chadsey, God has undertaken your cause; none can give you any trouble now, for your landlord died last night. But he has left no will; and no one knows who is heir to the estate."

8. John Ardesoif, Esq., was a young man of large fortune, and passionately fond of cock-fighting. He had one favourite bird,

by which he had won many profitable matches. The last bet he laid upon this cock, he lost, which so enraged him, that he had the poor bird tied to a spit and roasted alive. The cries of the suffering animal were so affecting, that some gentlemen who were present attempted to interfere, which so enraged Mr Ardesoif, that he seized a poker, and declared, with the most furious vehemence, that he would kill the first man who interposed. But in the midst of his passionate asseverations—he fell dead upon the spot!

9. Some years ago, there lived in a village in Leicestershire, an elderly man, who was quite blind, but who, from his early acquaintance and familiarity with the place before this great affliction befell him, was enabled to find his way about the village and surrounding fields without a guide. A wicked woman, who lived at the place, jested with the poor man's infirmity, and frequently attempted to impose on him for the mere purpose of plaguing and distressing him, and had one day succeeded in contriving a very disagreeable vexation, to her own merriment. But, shortly after this, she gave birth to a son, who was born blind; and her following child, a son, was also born blind. When grown up, they obtained a precarious livelihood by opening the gates for passengers, on the roads adjoining the place, with the addition of a small allowance from the parish. Their blindness was regarded by their neighbours as a mark of God's just displeasure against the wanton and foolish wickedness of their parent.

10. The only sailor who perished in the Kent Indiaman, was present in the hold very shortly after the commencement of the fire which destroyed the vessel, when, availing himself of the confusion, he hastened to the cabin of the second mate, forced open a desk, and took from thence 400 sovereigns, which he rolled up in a handkerchief, and tied round his waist; but, in attempting to leap into one of the boats, he fell short, and the weight of his spoils caused him immediately to sink.

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## PROVIDENTIAL JUDGMENTS ON DISOBEDIENT CHILDREN.

1. Unnatural and disobedient children, are often, in the righteous retribution of Providence, punished for their wickedness. Mr Clarke, in his "examples," mentions the case of Adolf, son of Arnauld, Duke of Guelders, who, dissatisfied that his father should live so long, came upon him one night as he was going to bed, took him prisoner, obliged him to go on foot in a cold season, bare legged as he was, and then shut him a close prisoner in a dungeon for six months. Such disobedience and cruelty did not, however, go long unpunished; for, shortly after, the son was ap-

prehended, kept for a long time in prison, and after his release, was slain in a battle with the French.

2. Mr Clark mentions also an instance of an unnatural son near Cambray, in France, who, in a fury, turned his mother out of doors thrice in one day, telling her that he would rather see his house on fire, and burnt to ashes, than that she should remain in it one day longer. The same day, it is related, his house was burnt down, no person knowing how the fire originated.

3. The same author relates the story of an old man, bowed down with age and infirmity, and at the same time in destitute circumstances, who, on coming to his son, in affluent circumstances, for some supply of food and clothing, was disowned and driven away with bitter and reproachful speeches. The poor old man went away with a heavy heart, and tears flowing from his eyes; "which the Lord beholding," says Mr Clarke, "struck his unnatural son with madness, of which he could never be cured till his death."

4. The Rev. Herbert Palmer, an eminent divine, was remarkable for his dutiful affection to his parents, not only when he was a child, but during his whole life. He was peculiarly attentive to his pious aged mother; promoting to the utmost of his power, both her temporal and spiritual comfort, even to the day of her death, which happened not long before his own. He used frequently to enforce this duty in his ministry, observing the emphasis which God puts upon it through the whole of the Scriptures. He used to say that he had noticed the effects of disobedience to parents, so that he scarcely ever knew undutiful children escape some visible judgment of God in the present life; he also thought that the mischiefs which occurred in society frequently took their rise in contempt of parental authority.

5. Philip Henry, speaking once of a wicked son in the neighbourhood, who was very undutiful to his mother, charged some of his children to observe the providence of God concerning him: "Perhaps," says he, "I may not live to see it, but do you take notice whether God do not come upon him with some remarkable judgment in this life, according to the threatening implied in the reason annexed to the fifth commandment;" but he himself lived to see it fulfilled not long after, in a very signal providence.

6. A profligate youth, at the University of St Andrews, who had come to hear Mr John Welsh, grandson of the celebrated John Knox, preach, threw something at him in mockery, which struck him. Mr Welsh paused, and, before the whole multitude, which was very large, said, "I know not who has put this public affront on a servant of Jesus Christ; but be he who he may, I am persuaded there will be more present at his death, than are hearing me preach this day!" It turned out to be a son of Sir James Stanfield, of Newmilns, near Haddington; and, strange to

say, some years after, this unhappy youth was executed for the murder of his own father!

7. "A boy," says Abbott, "in a violent passion, once called his father an old liar! His father is now dead, and the boy has become a young man; but he says he never shall forget having used such dreadful language. He cannot think of his father without feelings of bitter remorse."

8. There was lately a man who had an only son, to whom he was very kind, and gave every thing that he had. When his son grew up and got a house, he was very unkind to his poor old father, whom he refused to support, and turned out of his house. The old man said to his grandson, "Go and fetch the covering from my bed, that I may go and sit by the way-side and beg." The child burst into tears, and ran for the covering. He met his father, to whom he said, "I am going to fetch the rug from my grandfather's bed, that he may wrap it round him, and go a-begging." Tommy went for the rug, and brought it to his father, and said to him, "Pray, father, cut it in two; the half of it will be large enough for grandfather, and perhaps you may want the other half when I grow a man and turn you out of doors." The words of the child struck him so forcibly, that he immediately ran to his father, asked forgiveness, and was very kind to him till he died.

THE END.

EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY JOHNSTONE AND HUNTER, HIGH STREET.